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ABSTRACT

The ten selections in this journal were among papers presented at two scholarly meetings on research on film conducted at the Center for Twentieth Century Studies. The papers deal with the following topics: narrative patterns in "Only Angels Have Wings"; "King Kong" and the ideology of spectacle; introducing narratology to film students via "Citizen Kane"; a cinematics model for film studies in higher education; the struggle for autonomy and departmental status experienced by film teachers in American universities; ways in which film can be studied within a literary context; the integration of theory and practice in the teaching of film; the anthropological implications of regarding film as communication; teaching the soundtrack; and methods of close cinematic analysis. (GW)

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NARRATIVE PATTERNS IN "ONLY ANGELS HAVE WINGS"

Alan Williams

Analysis of a narrative film poses from its very onset a curious set of difficulties. Any precise work on a text requires definition of both levels of analysis and critical procedures—the semiological "principles of pertinence." However, such work is in constant danger of dissolution when confronted with the glossy surfaces of "transparent" texts, particularly those (such as films) which manipulate huge quantities of information. How can one deal sanely with textual systems which proceed by a careful balance of codic interference and combination, which strive (precisely) *not* to be read as production of meaning?

One way "in" is the sequence. The carefully polished "reflection" of reality presented in narrative film—"reality" to be read here as "validation of the prevailing ideology"—incorporates certain discontinuities. The sequences (or autonomous segments) delineated by these (pseudo-) breaks offer one sort of entry into the seeming plenitude and continuity of the "classic" cinema. It is not by chance that Christian Metz's first efforts to elaborate a semiology of narrative cinema centered on this problematic (the *grande syntagmatique de la bande-image*). But the study of film, as Metz points out,[1] differs from that of the *cinema*, and the problem of the sequence reasserts itself when one is confronted with particular works. The autonomy of certain portions of a film is most often "evident," but how do we establish it in a rigorous manner, and where does such analysis lead? Such will be our point of departure for study of Howard Hawks' *Only Angels Have Wings*.

Segmentation

In breaking the film into meaningful units of reading, we rely on three criteria: unity of place, of character, and of action or tone (dramatic

function). These pertinences will combine in two ways to produce different types of autonomous segments. We will term the more common type a *static* segment; it is governed primarily by unity of place and, secondarily, of characters—corresponding in general to what Metz terms the *scene* (although some, by including lapses of time, would be classified as sequences). A combination of codes differentiates static segments from their adjoining bits of film. Unity of place is most strongly emphasized by different types of lighting: bright and diffused in the bar, darker and with defined sources in the office, and so on. The different areas of the set have specific spatial configurations; these govern camera set-ups, as with the medium and American shots for the open space of the bar, American shots and close-ups in the more closed office, or long and medium shots intercut with close-ups in the exteriors.

In the static segment place is of primary importance in determining unities of narration; characters may come and go, but the filmic world retains a carefully balanced integrity. Dialogue and sound effects emphasize the passage from one part of the set to another (and, most frequently, to another segment with different narrative concerns): there is frequently a pause, a salutation, a change of conversation, or a transition from music or conversation to engine noises of the planes, or frequently, silence. Static segments are also characterized by a strong unity of tone, types of human interaction characterizing the various areas of the set. The bar is the place of jocular exchanges and gestures of support, the office is devoted to business matters and to more personal conversation, the airfield is pervaded with the fear of death.

Not all units of the film are characterized by unambiguous boundaries, however; we must account for occasional conflicts of pertinence by introducing sub-segments (Table). It happens occasionally that a change of place may occur in an otherwise static segment without any marked indication of a break, resulting in a "static" segment encompassing adjoining areas of the set. One example (what we will term below segment 8) links the office and bar, normally separate, by continuation of dialogue, unity of characters, and constancy of lighting and image size.

This problem introduces our second type of narrative unit, the "action" segment. These portions of the film are more complex, often longer than the others. They are dominated and shaped by unity of action and are less dependent on place or character than the static

segments. Nonetheless, they retain a dominant locale and set of characters, which are freely combined as they develop. The soundtrack plays an important role in unifying larger numbers of basic set-ups, locations, types of lighting, image size, camera angle, and so on.

The first mail flight and plane crash (segment 3) is a good example of this sort of unit. By unity of place and type of continuity it breaks into three subsegments (a frequent sort of division). The dominant locale is the field, where the unit begins and ends (takeoff and crash). The central subunit takes place in the office and (by parallel editing) in the mountain pass. One major reason to consider this segment to "take place" on the field, aside from the pattern of departure and return, is the continued presence there of two important *observers*, Bonnie (the visitor from "outside" the field) and Dutchie (the owner of the airline). In terms of the film's "emotional flow" (to borrow a term from Raymond Durgnat), in one way this segment remains on the field with Dutchie and Bonnie and in another way it leaves the field, literally and via radio with Joe (the flyer) and Geoff (the boss), but then returns.

In the table, these principles of division are applied to the film. This type of outline will, of course, retain a certain arbitrariness, the only real "unity" being the film itself. A narrative analysis must "begin" somewhere, however, and this breakdown will be used to show progressively larger patterns in the film's narrative movement. The segmentation indicates place, characters, and elements of narrativity. Subdivisions are indicated by letters. Also indicated is a larger division, an alternation between night and day in the film. To facilitate discussion of the film's own temporality, reel changes (in 35 millimeter projection) have been given, in some cases approximately where within a segment.

Rl.	#	Place	Narrative Elements
		Part One (night)	
①	1a b c	Between Boat and Bar	Less and Joe meet the Northbound boat for the mail; they see Bonnie's arrival, and they try and then succeed in picking her up and taking her to the airfield.
	2	Bar	Joe and Less draw straws for the mail flight. Less loses, but the bet is countermanded by Geoff, who appears from the office.
	3	Office, Field, Pass, then return to Field (see p. 359)	Joe leaves with the mail, encounters bad weather, and on his return crashes in a foolish attempt to land his plane.
②	4	Office	Geoff and Dutchie discuss the airline's financial and technological plight.
	5	Bar	Bonnie is enraged by the flier's apparent callousness. Geoff, in response, pushes her outside the front Bar door.
	6	Outside Front Door	Bonnie talks with Sparks and then with the Kid. She learns of the flier's particular manner of facing death.
	7a b	The Bar Same, later (indicated by dissolve).	Back in the Bar, Bonnie is accepted by the group, plays the piano, then later talks with Geoff alone until he leaves with the mail.
③		FADE TO BLACK	
		Part Two (day)	
	8	Office and Bar, the next morning	Geoff returns safely and is greeted by the Kid. Finding that Bonnie has remained at the field, Geoff is angry.
		FADE TO BLACK	
	9	Outside Office and Office	The Southbound boat arrives with the mail shipment with the new pilot.
	10	Bar	Geoff meets the new pilot, recognizes him as McPherson, the man responsible for the death of the Kid's brother. The Kid returns from a flight, takes some time to recognize McPherson, is restrained by Geoff from violence.

	Rl. #	Place	Narrative Elements
Part Two (day)	11	Office and Mine (intercut by telephone)	A mine owner offers Geoff a large reward for flying his injured son to a hospital from a difficult landing site. Geoff offers the job to McPherson, who accepts.
	④ 12	Plane and Office (via radio) and Mine	McPherson leaves for the mine. Geoff gives the Kid an eye exam, then "grounds" him.
	13	Office	Geoff and Judy reminisce about their past affair; Bonnie is caught spying on them.
	14	Bar and Office	In a fight about McPherson's presence, Less breaks his arm. McPherson lands safely.
	FADE TO BLACK		
	15	Field and Plane	Geoff tests a plane and almost crashes it. Bonnie runs away sick.
	16	Bonnie's Room	The Kid brings Bonnie stomach medication and some consolation for being "soft."
	17	Office	Gent is assigned the mail flight.
	18	Bar	Gent, having discovered he is to fly nitroglycerine with the mail, refuses the trip. He is fired; Geoff gives McPherson the job.
	⑤ 19a	Plane and Field	McPherson leaves with mail and nitro; he encounters bad weather and turns back, dumping explosive on birds in the pass.
	b	Office, Plane, Pass	
	c	Plane, Field, Pass	
	FADE TO BLACK		(McPherson leaves again with the mail.)
Part Three (night)	20	Plane, Lookout, Office	McPherson has delivered mail, and is returning. It is night.
	21	Bar	Geoff finds Judy drunk. He sobers her up and lectures her on her responsibility for her husband.
	22	Geoff's room	Geoff finds Bonnie taking a shower in his room. Their reconciliation is interrupted by Judy (thanking Geoff) and then by the Kid (to test the newest airplane).

Rl. #	Place	Narrative Elements
Part Three (night)		
23a	Boat	Northbound boat arrives with mail shipment.
b	Office and Lookout	Geoff and the Kid decide to fly the new plane, a trimotor adapted to bad weather conditions.
24	Bar	With the others present, Geoff and the Kid prepare for their takeoff.
25	Office	In attempting to force him to stay at the airfield, Bonnie accidently shoots Geoff in the shoulder with a revolver. McPherson offers to take his place on the flight.
⑥		
26a	Field and Plane	The Kid and McPherson take off; their
b	Office, Lookout, Plane	plane will not fly high enough to go over
c	Field and Plane	the mountains. Against Geoff's orders, they fly the pass. They hit a bird and return, crashing on the field.
FADE TO BLACK		
27	Office and Outside	The Kid dies of a broken neck.
28	Office	Dutchie announces the closing of the field.
29	Bar	Depression among the fliers as the Kid's effects are brought in. Geoff leaves the room abruptly.
30	Office and Lookout	Bonnie comforts Geoff. The lookout radios that the pass is clear, and Geoff and Less decide to fly the last mail flight. Indirectly, by flipping the Kid's two-headed coin, Geoff asks Bonnie to stay with him at the now-to-be-subsidized airfield.

Space, Time and Narration

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the film's narrative structure is its clear division into three almost precisely equal parts (as can be seen in the chart above by the reel numbers), three units of narrative time distinguished primarily by an alternation of night and day. Part one begins in early evening with Bonnie's arrival and ends at about two the next morning

with Geoff's departure for the inland. The image fades to black at this point (for the first time in the film, at the end of the second reel), fading in on the office illuminated by the early morning sun. For an equal period (until slightly after the beginning of reel five) all events occur during daylight hours, large lapses of time being indicated by fades (after segments 8 and 14). Despite the longer period of time represented—one week—this portion of the film preserves chronology similar to the beginning, progressing from early morning to late afternoon. This daylight section ends with Geoff's order that McPherson leave again with the mail. The third part (again fading in from black) begins at night with McPherson's return announced by radio and ends this same night, with Geoff and Less flying off to deliver the final mail shipment which will win the airline a government subsidy.

Even from this brief summary a pattern is clear. Not only are the three large sections of *Only Angels Have Wings* separated by an alternation of day and night, but they also share a common pattern of arrivals and departures. This structure arises from a principle of repetition set up in the plot. Boats stop at Barranca twice weekly, northbound and southbound. Each boat brings a shipment of mail to be delivered to the interior. Since the story covers one week at the airfield, three boats arrive, and each section of the film centers on the resulting mail flights.

But the pattern established for each of the three "acts" is more precise, for each flight encounters difficulty with weather conditions and must be attempted twice. The first delivery is begun by Joe to be successfully completed by Geoff (between parts one and two). The second flight is attempted by McPherson who turns back and returns to the air to complete it (between parts two and three). The third flight is attempted by McPherson and the Kid, who crash on the field; it is completed (presumably) by Geoff and Less at the end of the film.

Within the larger pattern of the three sections the second, daylight portion, is differentiated in several important ways. Most significantly, and in keeping with its lighter visual tone (except for the false "night" of the Kid's eye exam) no tragedy occurs. Danger is successfully averted by McPherson, Geoff, and then McPherson again. The accidents in the first and third parts of the film are caused by the pilots' refusal to obey orders. In the second part, on the other hand, McPherson follows Geoff's command (to turn back and dump his cargo of nitro), thus preventing a crash which would have paralleled those in parts one and three. McPherson can thus complete the mail delivery which he initially attempted.

In noting the importance of the *transfer* of an *object*[2] (the mail)

in the film's structure, we are led to a consideration of space and narrative, for obviously the notion of "transfer presupposes spatial divisions." The mail arrives by sea and must be moved inland, via the mountain pass (always the space of conflict in the film). Thus each large part of the narrative has a similar spatial progression: from the field to the boat and back, then an attempted delivery and then successful completion of the transfer to the inland.

Space is an important element of the film in another manner: it indicates (in a real way it creates) different stages in interpersonal relationships within the fiction. To different portions of the set correspond certain characters and types of interaction, as we have noted already. For example, Geoff clearly dominates the office, where business is a major concern; the bar, on the other hand, is the place of the group and of mutual support. This sort of distinction is not static, however, but rather is set up only to be contaminated.

This contamination will function most obviously in sexual terms. The men in the film circulate evenly through the set, although they have different areas of domination. This is not the case for the three women, Lillie, (Joe's girlfriend), Judy and Bonnie. Lillie is excluded from the all-male group at the airfield; she first appears outside on the field and later briefly in the bar, but near the door to the street. Judy, on the other hand, being already integrated into the group by her marriage to McPherson and her past affair with Geoff, is first seen in the bar (coming down the stairs from the private rooms above). She has immediate access to the office, which Lillie never has and which Bonnie only acquires at the end of the film.

Bonnie's spatial coordinates are the most complex. The various stages of her integration into the fliers' pseudo-family are expressed by her presence in successive areas of the set. Her progress is similar to that of the mail, although she moves only from the sea to Geoff's office—the part of the set most associated with the inland. In part one she moves from the sea to the airfield, is rejected (pushed out the front door towards the sea), returns inside and remains, never entering the office. It is from the door between the bar and field that she watches Geoff's takeoff. Her appearances in part two are rare, mainly in the bar, but she penetrates very briefly into Geoff's office in segment 13. Only in part three will she enter the office and stay (after having entered Geoff's room in segment 22). At the end of part three she is again seen looking out a door at Geoff's plane, but this (almost identical) shot reflects a significant change: she looks from the door between *office* and field.

If Bonnie's changing relations with Geoff are crystallized in her movement through the set, her progress with the Kid is equally clear from the location of their four conversations, all of them about Geoff. These take place outside the front door (segment 6), in the bar (segment 7), on the field (segment 15), and in her room (segment 16), and the tone of the Kid's remarks changes from hostility to acceptance. Bonnie does not appear after her last conversation with the Kid until segment 22, in Geoff's room. Her absence permits development of problems between Judy and McPherson, but this five segment gap is made (textually) natural by a pairing of segments 16 and 22: they are linked as the only two locales not used at least twice (and by function—they are in private rooms) and by symbolic offerings of stomach medication and of coffee. The latter detail however, introduces another level of signification.

Indices

Significant elements, smaller than the patterns we have discussed so far—single shots, actions, lines of dialogue, and so on—recur throughout the film in the manner of *leitmotifs*, developing, extending, and explicating larger trends in the narrative. We will designate these elements as *"indices,"* using a term of Roland Barthes.[3] Though not major vehicles of the plot, they provide continuity and give "clues" to what is going on and what will occur afterwards.

It is characteristic of Hawks that these elements are introduced casually and gradually assume importance in the course of the film. A good example is the development of cigarette lighting, generally associated with Geoff and first emphasized with his appearance in segment 2. He enters the bar from the office with an unlit cigarette and takes Bonnie's from her hand to light his own. The Kid is introduced in an almost identical fashion—in relation to Geoff in segment 3. In this way positions are defined: Geoff will find his loyalties divided between Bonnie and the Kid. (This pattern of exchange established at the beginning will be reversed at the end of the film with the transfer of the two-headed coin from the Kid to Geoff to Bonnie.)

Throughout the film lighting cigarettes establishes not only patterns of interaction but also functions as communication among the characters, generally as gestures of support. In segments 4 and 28, for example, shortly after each plane crash, Geoff asks Dutchie for a

light (in the office) as an affirmation of their relationship—in each case Dutchie grudgingly complies. The most complete affirmation of support in the film is the presentation of an already lit cigarette, which occurs only twice, immediately after each plane crash. In segment 3 the Kid does this for Geoff; in segment 27 Geoff does the same for the dying Kid. Only twice in the film are lights conspicuously not given to characters in need of them. In segment 10, when McPherson's identity is revealed, he must light his own cigarette; shortly after this the Kid's light is conspicuously delayed (as indicant of tension and of his partial blindness: the match is lit after he recognizes McPherson). This imbalance will be eliminated—the Kid has received a light, McPherson has not—only in segment 29 when in identical position and framing the latter will finally get a light from the fliers, as recognition of his heroism.

Another set of indices in the film concerns the nature and position of music, which is of two sorts, "natural" and "background," (only present on the soundtrack). To this division is added the possibility of absence of all music, giving a two-dimensional set of elements which will assume specific connotations. No music whatever occurs in the second, daylight section of the film when, as we noted, no tragedy occurs. In general, music is associated with the night and the danger which accompanies it. In parts one and three, where music does occur, the two types are used in different fashions; the "natural" music is associated with Bonnie and the natives of Barranca (in 1b, 7a, and so on) whereas the "background" music accompanies the takeoffs which conclude parts one and three and is thus associated with the fliers and their planes. Geoff is placed in opposition to diegetic music at two points, in segments 3 and 7, when he says "Turn off that music in there," (when Joe is attempting to land) and when he is incapable of playing a song on the piano. The indices associated with music thus partake of the more general opposition male/female (which we will examine later).

Many other sets of *indices* could be discussed, such as the importance of doors, the use of cold water, and references to chance and family roles. The examples given must serve as illustrations of this level of signification and not as a comprehensive listing of these elements. We will discuss one final set, however—elements which first appear as *indices* and gradually grow in importance to assume a major narrative function. These are the birds, which are referred to directly three times in the course of the film and indirectly twice. The direct

references are symmetrically spaced, in segments 6, 19, and 26, in the first attempts at the delivery of the mail in each part of the film. In part one, as Bonnie watches with admiration the takeoff of Joe's plane, Geoff says ironically, "Yeah it's just like a big beautiful bird," to which she replies, "No, it's a man. . . ." In part two, McPherson dumps the nitro on the condor nest before ending his aborted flight, and in part three the triplane crashes in flames after hitting one of the birds in the pass. The opposition bird/man grows in importance in the course of these events. But birds are also referred to indirectly in the title, which implies the same opposition (and the equation of birds and death) and subtly in another detail—the Kid's two-headed coin. On the American quarter, traditionally used for flipping, the "heads" side portrays a human head and the "tails" side the American eagle. But the Kid's coin, in abolishing chance, by implication also eliminates the eagle. Through these two indirect references and through the nature of their interventions in the film, the birds connote chance and death, and the opposition birds/men becomes part of the film's ruling opposition nature/culture.

Repetition: From Index to Icon

Repetition is an important formal principle in all of "classic" narrative cinema. It is a peculiarity of *Only Angels Have Wings*, however, that repetition is also a theme, of the same order as other themes or "subjects" of the film such as "courage" or "chance." Like the birds, the notion of repetition begins as one of many indices in the dialogue and grows in importance to become a major aspect of the narrative.

The idea that characters in the film are living through situations which have confronted them in the "past" (the period before the beginning of the film is introduced first in a humorous, incidental manner, in segment one, when Less and Joe wonder if they will have "better luck than last week" with the passengers on the boat which has arrived. In segment two, when Joe tries to flatter Bonnie, Less exclaims, "You mug, you heard me use that two weeks ago!" [We should recall that the importance of these references to other "weeks" stems in part from the cyclical week-by-week time structure represented in the film]). In this manner, the first appearances of repetition as a subject to be developed in the text refer to types of behaviour between the sexes. Later, in segment 7, when Bonnie and Geoff talk about

the latter's relationships with women, Bonnie says, "Boy, someone must have given you quite a beating once," referring unknowingly to Judy, who will say to Geoff in segment 13, about Bonnie, "Still at it, aren't you Geoff?" These references gradually prepare one of the two directions in which the theme of repetition will develop. The formation of the couple Bonnie-Geoff and the reformation of that of Judy-McPherson depends on each of the characters "reliving" old difficulties connected with sexuality. Geoff, by "acting out" his former problems with Judy in his new relationship with Bonnie, becomes the clearest example of this idea. (The new couples may only form at the price of a compromise of male and female roles which we will discuss. Here the important point is the role of the characters' "past" in this equilibration.)

Repetition is also linked, as theme, to the dangers of flying and to chance. In segment 2, the men draw straws to decide who will fly the mail, and Less says, "I always say odd and it always comes out . . ." He is cut off by engine noises, and Dutchie's outburst, "Oh, I *hate* that noise!" again indicates the repetitive nature of their work. This aspect of repetition is developed in the relationship between McPherson and the Kid. Like Geoff and Bonnie, the two men also have a situation to "relive," but of a different sort. McPherson achieves a symbolic redemption at the film's end—indicated by his passage from dark clothing to the white of his bandages and by the fliers' final offer of matches and cigarettes—through re-enacting a previous flight in which he abandoned the Kid's brother to die. When told by the Kid to jump from the burning plane (in segment 26c), he replies, "Not this time," a moment already prepared by the Kid's ironic comment as they enter the plane, "There's a parachute if you want it."

But a more important aspect of the film's structure concerns the interaction of repetition as formal and as "thematic" element. This interaction (and interference) will alter the film's function as representation, from mere "reporting" to a creation of textual analogies. We will approach this problem through an examination of one of several explicit pairings of narrative segments in *Only Angels Have Wings*.

Segment 26 is not an isolated series of random events. It is explicitly paired with segment 3. The two units are symmetrically placed in the film's running time, they share the same general movement (field, radio room and plane, field), and even editing is remarkably similar (particularly in the plane crashes). In both segments Geoff

tries vainly to communicate with the plane via the radio set on the field, and both are followed by a return to the office with Geoff and Dutchie, in which many indices, such as the cigarette ritual, are repeated exactly. The segments are each preceded by a substitution of pilots, and the crashes follow violations of Geoff's orders. Bonnie is seen with the musicians in the bar after both segments, where the disposition of the dead men's effects will be strikingly alike (with exact repetition of dialogue).

Evidently these repeated motifs and situations serve to emphasize essential differences between the units. The very notion of repetition is, of course, inextricably bound up with the possibility of difference. A sort of referential calculus develops within the film in which non-repeated themes are "subtracted" ("death by loyalty" replacing "death by individual desire" from 3 to 26. . . .) and repeated ones emphasized ("danger," "chance," etc.). One could validly study these differences and relate them to a certain notion of spectator "psychology," in order to discern structures of "identification" produced by the film. From a textual point of view, however, another problematic emerges.

The characters "relive" old situations (not included in the film) but with different results; but this is presented in a discourse in which repetition and difference *within* the text are balanced to coincide at another level with the evocations of the characters' "past." The couples Geoff/Bonnie and McPherson/the Kid supposedly re-experience a "previous" set of problems; the text mimics this idea within the representation by "reliving" at other levels, this projected onto the spectator. Thus emerges a discourse which becomes, by extending Peirce's definition beyond the level of the sign, iconic. The iconic sign, it will be recalled, is characterized by a relationship of "resemblance" between sign and referent.[4] But textual systems, organizations of signs, through their very organization may also resemble their referents. This is precisely what occurs, it would seem, in *Only Angels Have Wings* in the problematic of repetition.

The cinema, in Peirce's terms, is largely iconic and indexical at the level of its signs, with the exceptions of dialogue and written material, which would be termed symbolic. Certain textual systems, however, may produce a type of iconicity which works at another level of textuality, going beyond the iconic nature of the photographic image ("analogy") to a larger relationship of resemblance more like that of a blueprint or map. The text is read as a discourse which achieves a

sort of mimicry of its *produced* subjects by the textual process of their *production*.[5]

Male/Female, Nature/Culture

It remains to examine the two ruling oppositions of the film, between men and women and between the forces of nature and of culture. These oppositions govern the two centers of interest of the narrative: the formation of the couple Geoff/Bonnie and the delivery of the mail. Nonetheless, these two sequences of "events" and the oppositions which they develop are not wholly independent, as we will see.

Only Angels Have Wings develops from its very beginning a marked sexual polarization of its characters, principally through the dialogue. As usual with Hawks, this notion begins casually and grows in emphasis, culminating in Geoff's declaration in segment 7 of why he "wouldn't ask a woman to do anything." The initial division which he describes might be summarized in this manner: dominent male traits are independence, activity, suppression of emotion, and love of danger, while dominant female traits are dependence, passivity, exploitation of emotion, and need for safety and reassurance. In describing this opposition, Geoff denounces the "female" traits and affirms his adhesion to this ideology of sexual differences, an ideology which is presented so clearly, it would seem, in order to be undermined and partially destroyed.

We have already mentioned that each attempted mail flight is preceded by a substitution of pilots—it is interesting to note the reasons for these changes. Joe attempts the first flight because another pilot is sick; McPherson flies the second because Gent is afraid of the nitro; McPherson attempts the third flight because Geoff is shot in the shoulder. In addition to these disabilities the Kid is found to be blind, Less breaks his arm, the Kid and Joe die, and McPherson burns his hands and face. By the end of the film not one flier remains physically whole, except Gent, who has been fired. The final mail run, begun at the end, will be completed by Geoff and Less, both of whom have the use of only one arm. The result of this progression is the weakening of the most cherished "male" notion of the film: the rejection of human interdependence.

The progression of the breaking down of sexual polarities can be most clearly seen in the substitution of the couple Geoff/Bonnie for the initial couple Geoff/the Kid. Bonnie's arrival at the beginning

of the film is balanced at the end by the Kid's death. Equilibrium of this sort is maintained in the course of the film: three characters arrive (Bonnie, McPherson, Judy) three characters leave (Joe and the Kid die, Gent is fired). The specific substitution of Bonnie for the Kid is made explicit in the transfer of the two-headed coin. The giving of this coin serves also as another indication of the modification of traditionally "masculine" values—through the coin Geoff can ask Bonnie to stay with him, compromising his ideal of independence, without verbalizing this compromise. By accepting the coin and the request which it only implies, Bonnie also compromises, with her demand for an explicit declaration of dependence by Geoff. For the female characters must also change for the final couples Geoff/Bonnie and McPherson/Judy to be formed; the women must become less dependent and passive as the men move in the opposite direction.

We have already introduced the film's second major opposition, nature/culture, in discussing the birds, which are perhaps the clearest representation of Nature as the active opponent of society in the film. *Only Angels Have Wings* is rather unusual as a narrative, in the almost total absence of the anthropomorphized figure of the "traitor." This function is attributed to nature itself: night, bad weather, birds, chance, and finally death. The heroes fight these forces to ensure one of the most basic elements of culture: communication, the delivery of the mail, the success of which ensures the victory of society, of coordination, of life itself.

In *Only Angels Have Wings* the mail functions as metonymic representative of communication and human interdependence. It must be moved between two spaces of society, the port and the city inland, through a zone of conflict—the pass through the mountains, in which the dangers of weather, birds and so on, are metonymically linked with Nature itself as the film's "villain."

Thus we may suggest a link between this opposition nature/culture and the development of sexuality already discussed, remembering that for Freud culture may survive only at the expense of extensive repression of the individual. The progressive debilitation of the fliers, the suppression of their independence in favor of cooperation and integration into a society modeled on the nuclear family (Geoff is called "Papa" and his best friend is "The Kid") is accomplished through a successive process of castration. This progression begins with minor characters and finally attains Geoff, whose wound—caused by a woman—may be read as distinctly sexual.

The women however, are not exempt from an analogous develop-

ment. The change operated on Bonnie and Judy in the course of the film is made quite explicit: they must cease hampering the activities of their men with demands of security—they must, in effect, abandon the role of the castrating female, which makes them subject to the same fate as the men. No longer capable of castration, they are themselves as castrated as the fliers. But the progressive debilitation of men and women alike is never complete in the film, as in fact the breakdown of sexual differentiations never reaches total equality: Geoff and Gent may overcome their handicaps through cooperation, while Bonnie, though finally integrated into the fliers' "family," remains on the field while the men leave for the final trip to the interior. It would thus be a misreading of the text to posit a status of women in Hawks' film radically different from that seen in the American cinema in general. Rather, *Only Angels Have Wings* distinguishes itself by making these two notions, castration/interdependence and sex-role differentiation not tacit presuppositions but objects for reflection, moving forces of its narrative. It is precisely the balancing of sexual imbalances through a generalized tendency to castration (or recognition of castration) which makes possible, in a Freudian reading of the text, the final victory of Culture over Nature.

Alan Williams is completing a Ph.D dissertation on Max Ophuls for the French Department at SUNY at Buffalo.

Notes

1. In *Langage et Cinema*, Paris: Larousse (1971), chapter III.
2. For this notion as well as certain others in the paper, I draw on A. G. Greimas' "Elements d'une grammaire narrative," in *Du Sens* (Paris: Le Senil).
3. "Introduction a l'analyse structurale du recit" in *Communications* no. 8.
4. See Wollen, *Signs and Meanings in the Cinema*, London: Seeker and Warburg, 1969, chapter III.
5. We have examined this problematic briefly in connection with Ophuls in "The Circles of Desire: Narration and Representation in *La Ronde*," *Film Quarterly*, xxvi, 5 (Fall 1973), pp. 35-41.

"KING KONG" AND THE IDEOLOGY OF SPECTACLE[1]

Judith Mayne

Ideologies, according to Louis Althusser, are the systems that link individuals to their real conditions of existence. What better example, one might argue, of the nature of film as an ideological system, than a film such as *King Kong*. The appeal of this film to a 1933 audience, plunged in the worst hardships of the Depression years, is most certainly an ideological appeal; and one which must be calculated not according to some vaguely defined notion of fantasy or escape, but rather in terms of the imaginary resolution of social and economic problems that it provides.

That *King Kong* responded in some direct way to the realities of Depression America is illustrated by the facts of its distribution. In 1932, a year preceding its release, unemployment had reached 12 million, or 25 percent of the labor force. The film was a smash success—only one of three films that were profitable for RKO in 1933. And yet the immediate success of *King Kong* can be misleading, for it suggests that the film can be seen as a simple document, a passive reflection of social ills and frustrations. If this were true, the critic's task would be simply the reconstruction of a series of one-to-one correspondences, never bothering with questions of technique, of narrative structure, in short: never bothering with the ideological implications of film itself.

This does not mean that an analysis of film and ideology should be a patient accumulation of the registers of form and content. If it can be agreed that films articulate ideology, then the principal task is rather an analysis of that very articulation, where the reference of a given text—in the case of *King Kong* , the American Depression—is a point of departure rather than a final conclusion. Films reproduce ideologies in the form of myths, cultural stereotypes, etc., which have an existence outside the films themselves. Such a reproduction of ideology is unthinkable without the si-

multaneous production of ideology which in the case of film might be succinctly referred to as the impression of reality—an impression achieved through the interactions of camera angle, depth of field, editing, and narrative structure—in short, a complex of technical procedures which assign the spectator a privileged position, drawing him or her into the film as into a natural unfolding of events.[2]

That *King Kong* is a tale of exploitation hardly needs to be emphasized. Filmmaker Carl Denham has, within this film, built a reputation, if not an empire, on venturesome deeds of cinematic derring-do, and *King Kong* recounts the most gigantesque of these. Guided by a pieced-together map of mysterious Skull Island, Denham directs his crew on the sea voyage which will lead them to "something that no white man has ever seen." That "something," of course, is King Kong. In spite of the mystery surrounding the legend of Kong, Denham's film project has been well engineered: his ship is overloaded with crew, full of gas bombs, not to mention the *pièce de résistance*, frail, blonde Ann Darrow, rescued by Denham in the nick of time from Depression anonymity to accompany the crew as bait for the mysterious beast. All of this is to make what Denham calls "the greatest picture in the world. . . . Something nobody's ever seen or heard of."

And so the trajectory of *King Kong* takes us from the Manhattan of soup lines and civilization in decay, to an island untouched by Western culture where black natives prepare for what must be one of our culture's most pervasive notions of savagery—the sacrifice of a young maiden to the terrorsome will of Kong. This opposition between savagery and civilization, and their eventual clash when Kong, brought back to Broadway alive, goes on a rampage, forms the principal narrative thread of the film. This opposition is, as well, the myth most overwhelmingly present in the film, an ideology which informs the film "from without." It should not be surprising that this is a major point of departure for the film, for such a myth of opposition between civilization and savagery embraces Western culture as a whole, exists outside the immediate framework of the Depression years, and therefore denies, in some sense, the specificity, the importance, and even the hardships of the Depression years.

In specifically narrative terms, such an opposition between savagery and civilization becomes translated in the film into the figures of Beauty and the Beast, figures which literally enclose the film. An "Arabian proverb," following the credits, announces the narrative proper of the film: "And the prophet said: 'And lo, the beast looked upon the face of beauty. And it staved its hand from killing. And from that day, it was as one dead.'" Carl Denham's final words complete a full circle: "It wasn't the

airplanes. 'Twas beauty killed the beast." Departing substantially from the actual fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast, the two figures become antithetical poles of civilization—Beauty, the white-skinned, golden-haired purity of Ann Darrow, the delicate, worshipped product of civilized Western society; and the Beast, the monstrous, hairy, black-skinned ape worshipped out of fear, the manifestation of precivilization.

All of the instances of clashes between these two opposing terms—the unappreciated arrival of Denham and crew on the island during a ceremony which is consequently ruined; the abduction of Ann Darrow by the natives; Kong's rampage through New York City—revolve around these figures of Beauty and the Beast. And the encounter of Ann and Kong—hovering between anticipation and actuality with all of its erotic undertones—forms the principal substance of the film. The means of this encounter is itself laden with an historical framework suggesting some precision to the general myth of civilization that informs the film. Denham's voyage across the ocean to Skull Island is shrouded in mystery and secrecy. In many ways the voyage in *King Kong* is the reiteration of a cliché common to nearly all science fiction and films of the fantastic, where voyage in whatever form functions simply as a device to bridge the gap between the real and the imaginary. One might pursue the device of the voyage in other directions pertinent to *King Kong* and its concern with precivilization, namely, the voyage of exploration and domination of the non-Western world predating *King Kong* by centuries. The myth of civilization and savagery must, in this light, be seen within the context of colonization. To be sure, it requires an active spirit of reductionism to seek far-fetched parallels between filmmaker Carl Denham and adventurers whose exploits have been glorified in various forms, beginning most emphatically in this particular context in eighteenth century works such as *Robinson Crusoe*. The point, however, is not to make rigid symbolic parallels, but rather to stress the fact that the figure of Carl Denham setting out on a voyage to the non-Western world carries with it a certain political history. And like explorers in these so-called savage lands, who defined their exploits as contributions to an understanding of human nature, Denham veils his project in terms of "pleasing the public" and "making a swell picture."

Like its distant predecessors, *King Kong* too raises the question—albeit in obtuse fashion—of the nature of human origins. When Kong clumsily, but nonetheless tenderly, cares for Ann Darrow, he is merely projecting the kinds of human qualities we desire to see in our most notable ancestors. The term "human," however, can be a dangerous one. When bourgeois ideology speaks of "human development" or the "history of man-

kind," what is almost always implicit is an equation between "humans" and white males. Accordingly, it is only Carl Denham who has any real control over Kong during most of the film and when his power fails, the phallic power of white civilization in the form of airplanes is ready to take his place. Woman, in the form of Ann Darrow, and nonwhites, in the form of the black natives of the island and also of Kong himself, are but means to Carl Denham's ends. In short, the "civilization" of *King Kong* is one built upon racist and sexist ideology.

This is an obvious statement, and *King Kong* lends itself very easily to obvious statements, concerning these functions of racism and sexism. But there is, nonetheless, some historical precision to be made, and here we move from myths of Western civilization, to myths pertinent to the Depression years themselves.

David Rosen has excellently analyzed the ways in which Kong himself is a projection of racial stereotypes. Equally important as the obvious physical stereotypes is, as Rosen illustrates, the equation of blacks with objects of spectacle. When Denham and his crew arrive on Skull Island in the midst of a ceremony, Denham's first words upon seeing the ritual are "what a show." Accordingly, when Denham first presents Kong to a New York audience, he says: "I'm going to show you the greatest thing your eyes have ever beheld. He was a king and a god in the world he knew. But now he comes to civilization, merely a captive, a show to gratify your curiosity."

Such an image corresponds, Rosen points out, to the ways in which popular culture of the time represented blacks:

> . . . popular cultural representations of the 20s and 30s continued to present the Sambo character and the minstrel tradition, exemplified by Stepin Fetchit on the one hand, and Al Jolson and Eddy Cantor on the other. In other words, blacks were presented as the stereotypical good-natured, fearful, stupid, lazy characters who loved to dance and sing, and who provided laughs and entertainment for white audiences.[3]

The racist ideology of *King Kong* depends on real events of the 1930s, to be sure. One must not forget that the Depression provided ample opportunity for racial scapegoating on both economic and social grounds; illustrated, for example, by the way in which the Scottsboro case, in which several black youths were accused of raping two white women, captured the national imagination. But equally important for this support of the film are the ways in which these events had already been filtered through the network of other cultural forms, of other means of representation.

The same could be said for the sexist framework of the film. Ann Darrow's situation—homeless, jobless, and hungry—was common among women, single women in particular, of the Depression. She is one of the "forgotten women" described by one women's magazine of the period who, euphemistically, "may be on the street at any time."[4] The New York Committee of Fourteen was more explicit in its 1932 declaration: ". . . inability to get work is forcing many women into prostitution or at least into borderline occupations. . . ."[5] Ann Darrow's potential crisis was also very much a part of a formula of "fallen women" films of the 1930s.[6] The women in these films find themselves in such severe economic crises—usually complicated with moral issues, such as Marlene Dietrich's dying husband in *Blonde Venus*—that their only possessions with any possible financial return are their bodies. Everything about Ann Darrow smacks of the pure, good girl—and on a superficial level she is saved both from the anonymity of the Women's Mission and from prostitution by Carl Denham. But the point, quite obviously, is that while Ann does not become a prostitute, she still has, like the prostitute, only one marketable possession—her body.

A myth of civilization encountering savagery, supported by racism and sexism: nothing could be more standard bourgeois ideological fare. To reconstruct the ideologies reproduced in *King Kong* in this fashion can be misleading in its own way, however, for implied is the elaboration of a clearly defined statement pursued from beginning to end with all the logic of a grammatical sentence. *King Kong* is a film informed by racism and yet when one considers that the spectator is made to identify with Kong in a basically sympathetic way, it becomes difficult to regard the film as a eulogy of racism. The question here is not so much one of manifest versus latent content, nor of the necessarily subtle mechanisms of fiction versus the topical sources they tap. At some point, rather, the consideration has to be not the what of the reference of *King Kong*, but rather how this reference is articulated into the logic of the film itself. The film moves with singular ease from one register to another, seemingly never anchoring itself totally in any one. The backdrop of *King Kong* is sporadic, an accumulation, an assemblage of different myths, ideologies, and stereotypes rather than a series of one-to-one correspondences. It is a backdrop of jagged lines of development, none of which is pursued to its end.

And yet the structure of *King Kong* is a paragon of symmetry. The center of the film, occurring on Skull Island, is enclosed by two sequences occurring in New York, and these two sequences in their turn are enclosed by the references to Beauty and the Beast. In addition, New York and Skull Island are held up to each other as in a mirror reflection. Our

first view of Skull Island, through Denham's map, could easily be mistaken for the Island of Manhattan. Just as Kong climbs to the top of his mountain and fights off pterodactyls in defense of Ann Darrow, so, in New York, he climbs to the top of the Empire State Building to ward off airplanes. His destruction in New York is completely prefigured, in short, in the Skull Island sequences.

This respect for symmetry, for well-ordered repetition, has a naturalizing effect: the potential violence and chaos of a social order is translated into a rigorously determined, easily consumable structure. And beneath the apparent innocence of the structure of this film is a subtle operation of displacement.[7] Consider, for example, the only sequence of the film which makes direct reference to the reality of the American Depression. Early in the film Denham goes to Manhattan to find a woman to star in his film. He inspects women lined up in front of a Women's Mission and, satisfied with none of them, stops at a fruit merchant's stall where he happens across Ann Darrow. The only real victms of the Depression that we see are women. This is far from being a metonymic process, by which the women would be representative of the economic sufferings of the Depression era as a whole. Rather, this is a means of displacement, of essentially shoving aside the general context, forgetting, as it were, that it exists, and isolating women—sex—as the object of our attention.

Such a process is prepared for by the opening moments of the film. When Weston, the theatrical agent, goes into the ship's cabin to discuss with Denham his inability to find a woman for Denham's adventure film, there are intimations of some strong class differences between the two. Everything about Weston signifies "bourgeois": his elegant apparel, his refined, if not pretentious, manner of speech, his bearing and manners, and his disapproval of sending a nice young girl with Denham's unsavory crew on a long sea voyage. "I've got a conscience," he tells Denham. "I can't send a young pretty girl on a job such as you ask without telling her what to expect." Denham stands in sharp contrast to the theatrical agent: brusque, with unpolished speech, Denham is in every way a typical petty-bourgeois entrepreneur. His determination to get what his picture needs knows none of the moral restrictions exemplified by Weston: "I'm going to get a girl for my picture even if I have to marry one!" he tells him.

And yet these potential differences are minimized by the way in which this sequence is filmed. During the first half of their discussion, the shot-reverse-shot construction of the sequence depicts Denham, seated, in low angle shots, and Weston, standing, in high angle shots. During the second half of their discussion—and in keeping with the symmetrical note of the entire film—their positions are reversed. Shot-reverse-shot has an equalizing

role to play, one which shuffles class differences aside in the name of what Denham and Weston have in common: they are both men, of course, but more important, they are men who deal, in one way or another, in the bartering of women.

Socio-economic class functions, in *King Kong*, are almost on the level of the unrepresentable—or at least, unrepresentable as such. Just as the women in front of the mission function as sexual items rather than members of the unemployed, so, with the only stock proletarian figure of the film, a similar process effectively denies his status in terms of class. Charlie, the Chinese cook, functions in this film not primarily as a worker, but as a comic Chinaman with an exaggerated accent who provides a few laughs for the crew members. Race and sex are convenient means, in short, of forgetting—or repressing—what class is all about.

Following the discussion between Denham and Weston, and Denham's determined exit, the filmmaker arrives in Manhattan in a cab in front of the Women's Mission. Shot-reverse-shot depicts Denham as he looks over the women, and the women themselves, tough in appearance and speech for the most part, who are apparently unaware of Denham's gaze. Shot-reverse-shot signifies no exchange here, as in the dialogue between Denham and Weston. Rather, the women are objectified by Denham as well as by the camera. They are like objects of spectacle, rigidified by Denham's gaze into pure, although unpromising, merchandise. Whereas the technique of shot-reverse-shot previously signified exchange, here it signifies domination under the guise of one of the most basic—and by extension, neutral—of cinematic techniques.

In the following shots, the domination becomes more literal, more explicit, and with it, the register of exchange associated with shot-reverse-shot becomes more literal as well. Ann Darrow, her back to the camera, is about to steal an apple from a fruit merchant's stall while Denham crumples a dollar bill in the merchant's hand to quell his threats to call the police. Ann Darrow's face is still hidden from the camera as she falls in a near faint into Denham's arms. As she rolls her eyes and feebly lifts her head, a full lit close-up reveals the beautiful face the filmmaker has been searching for. Denham, by paying for the apple that Ann was about to steal, has effectively bought Ann Darrow herself.

We move to a restaurant where Denham explains his plans for Ann's future: "It's money and adventure and fame! It's the thrill of a lifetime! It's a long sea voyage that starts at 6 o'clock tomorrow morning." Their dialogue, once again, is depicted in shot-reverse-shot construction. Their exchange is pervaded by a type of domination of a different order: shots of Denham reveal background activity, people walking in the restaurant, while

Ann is shot against a tile wall. Over the majority of shots of Ann, it is Denham's voice that we hear. The literal implications of a close-up are taken, in the case of Ann Darrow, to their extreme: she is fragmented, cut out of any real relationship with space and time to become only the object of Denham's gaze and of his power.

From the very beginning of the film, Ann Darrow is merchandise, but merchandise of a particular order. She is an object of spectacle, both in terms of her function as actress in Denham's film, and the way she is portrayed for us by the camera. In this, she shares a fundamental identity with the natives of the island and with Kong himself. This use of the device of spectacle—from the basic technique of shot-reverse-shot construction to the presentation of literal spectacles within the film—is the fundamental ideological mechanism structuring *King Kong* as a textual system.

King Kong is a film about the making of a film, or more precisely, about the making of a film that never is finished. *King Kong* depicts its own production not from a critical point of view; it is not, in other words, the function of spectacle itself that is objectified, but rather the very object of spectacle, in almost redundant fashion. Three spectacles-within-the-film occur. The first, during the sea voyage, shows Denham rehearsing Ann from behind his camera, perfecting the scream and the fearful facial expression that will be heard and seen throughout the film. The second takes place on Skull Island, when Denham attempts, unsuccessfully, to film the inhabitants' ceremony without their knowledge. And the last, of course, is the presentation of the giant ape on a Broadway stage. Denham is, in each case, the master of ceremonies—the spectator within the film. Ann Darrow, the natives, Kong: each is an object of potential fascination, a fascination which is further mystified by the distance established between Denham and each of his stars. All are potential sources of profit, and because of this, rather than in spite of it, they remain outside of Denham's orbit. Ann Darrow is the woman whom Denham begrudgingly "hauls around," remarking, "Isn't there any romance or adventure in the world without having a flapper in it?" To the natives, Denham cannot speak directly, for he doesn't know their language; he must instead rely on the convenient familiarity of Skipper Englehorn with their dialect. And with Kong himself, the distance is, at first, a series of failures: Ann, the gas bombs, the chains—none of these succeed in keeping the beast under Denham's control. Paradoxically, it is fear which creates the schism between Denham and Kong, but in tables-turned fashion, for it is not Denham that teaches Kong fear, as the filmmaker triumphantly declared, but rather the reverse.

One element can hardly be ignored in these relationships between Denham and the objects of spectacle—that is, the camera. During the ocean voyage, Denham recounts an anecdote to Ann that suggests that cinema itself is a means, however subtle, of domination. During the rehearsal scene, Ann asks Denham if he always does his own camerawork. "Ever since a trip I made to Africa," Denham replies. "I would have gotten a swell picture of a charging rhino but the cameraman got scared. The darn fool, I was right there with a rifle. Seems he didn't trust me. I haven't used a cameraman since." The play on words, between "shooting a camera" and "shooting a gun" suggests an equation between the two. And significantly enough, Denham and his crew are "armed" only with cameras and guns when they arrive on the island for the first time. If one shoots a camera as one shoots a gun, then Denham's cry that to bring King Kong back to New York *alive* is "worth more than all the moving pictures in the world" is important not only in terms of the increased profit such a live spectacle would mean to Denham, but also in terms of the definition of cinema itself that is suggested. For to bring Kong back alive is to go beyond the mere representation that is cinema, accentuating, in the process, that there is a layer of reality that is unrepresentable.

It might well be argued that such hypothesizing is out of place, particularly when one realizes that the figure of Carl Denham is a thinly disguised representation of the filmmaker Merian Cooper, the co-author of *King Kong*. Cooper himself built a reputation on precisely the type of adventure films for which Denham became famous in the film. The importance of such a reference can, once again, be misleading, for Denham and Cooper are figures in a much more far-reaching myth. The cinema represented in *King Kong* is one of exploration, of adventure, of domination, of capture. It is, in blunt terms, a cinema of imperialism. One might recall, in this context, that Denham's use of a camera to manipulate and control is not unlike the way in which one of Denham's mythical predecessors, Robinson Crusoe, achieves his first act of domination over the black native Friday, through language, that is, through representation: ". . .first, I made him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life; I called him so for the memory of the time; I likewise taught him to say 'Master,' and then let him know that was to be my name. . . ."[8]

The cinema of Carl Denham represents—reproduces is perhaps a better term in this context—more accurately than the language of Crusoe, and by extension, to control the live object Kong is to attempt to push the limits of representation as far as they might go. Denham confuses the two orders of representation and reality, attempting to define the brute force

and reality of nature that is Kong within the laws of representation, of spectacle.

And thus Kong, the "Eighth Wonder of the World," the spectacle to surpass all spectacles, is presented for inspection to a New York audience. Kong's appearance marks the first time in the film that we see Denham's public to whose wishes he begrudgingly bent in seeking out Ann Darrow. This is a public elegantly dressed, which speaks in cliches of aristocratic speech, and which has been willing to pay $20 to be the first to witness the mysterious Kong.

A question poses itself here—why should the appearance of Kong be the moment to define an audience as totally composed of members of the bourgeoisie? In terms of historical accuracy, it is no doubt true that film premières, at least, were reserved for the privileged. At the same time, the assumption is made in the film that this is Denham's regular audience. Now film audiences in the 1930s were not predominantly bourgeois, and Denham defines his own monetary project on satisfying as many people as possible.

It might be argued that these final scenes of the film suggest a class distinction between theatre and cinema. The implications of theatre are those of high art, cinema being relegated to the status of popular culture. It is perhaps tempting to look at the film in this way since it gives a precise ideological framework to Denham's placing of film in a secondary position to the "real thing" of theatre. The problem with the equation theatre/ bourgeoisie/ / cinema/working class, however, is that in terms of the film itself it does not really hold. The elegant New Yorkers come fully expecting to see a film. One older woman is even slightly horrified when an usher tells her that the evening's performance is "more in the nature of a personal appearance." In addition, numerous experimentations in popular theatre in the 1930s make it difficult to oppose the theatre and the cinema on the basis of class orientation.

The final New York sequence does suggest, however, that the spectacle in *King Kong*, with its movement from failed feature film to Broadway show, functions as a barometer of class position. Consider, for example, the change in the film in Denham's own economic and professional position. At the beginning of the film, Denham says that he "sweats blood to make a swell picture;" and during the first part of the film he continually defines his films as being essentially one-man jobs. But when Denham's project has changed and he has decided to bring Kong back alive, his relationship to his work changes somewhat. His crew no longer simply gets him to where he is going to film a motion picture but actively become involved

in the production of the spectacle itself. Denham's own role, accordingly, becomes more and more one of management. By the time Kong is ready for presentation on the New York stage, Denham is superstar, master of ceremonies, father figure, and producer all rolled into one.

Denham, in short, has passed through a type of initiation, one which is principally economic. But the economic sphere is unrepresentable—and thus, complementing Denham in his rise in economic status is Driscoll, who has courted and comforted Ann Darrow throughout her tribulations. By the time of the New York spectacle, he has become Ann's fiancé—a fact proudly displayed by Denham. Driscoll has also undergone an implied change in social status, through his protection of Ann Darrow, which makes him a hero. A moral order encloses, in other words, the entrepreneurial economic order represented by Denham. And ultimately, it is only this moral order which provides any semblance of an authentic restoration of order in the film. New York may be in shambles but the family—in the form of the couple of Ann and Jack—has emerged unscathed.

The final New York sequence is set off in symmetrical balance with the first Manhattan sequence in which Denham found Ann Darrow. It is somewhat curious that the first representation of New York in the film situates us in the context of the American Depression, albeit in a displaced way, and yet when we return to New York it is only a posh, elegant New York that we see and the effects of the Depression are invisible.

The symmetry between these two sequences is not so much a mirror image, as the image of a piece of film held up to its own negative image. Women stand in line at the mission and are panned from right to left; the spectators lined up at the theatre are panned in a similar movement, this time from left to right. Carl Denham, in the first sequence, pays money to possess Ann Darrow; the spectators in New York also pay to possess—however implicitly—King Kong (Denham, we recall, described Kong as a captive". . .only to gratify your curiosity.")

Ann in the first sequence, King Kong in the last, are objectified, fragmented, permitted no existence but as objects of spectacle to gratify Denham's greed for profit and the spectators' curiosity. The ways in which New York is equated with Skull Island—down to the repetition of the pattern spectacle/chaos—suggest more than an opposition and ultimate similarity between "savagery" and "civilization." For to equate New York with the island is to perceive both of them as "other"; New York, the most extreme, most exaggerated tendencies of capitalism; the island, a reflection of these tendencies in a so-called natural state, that has no regard for history. The mechanism seems curiously contradictory, for it would

seem that the American Depression would have no place for denunciations of capitalism in the form of an equation between its most accomplished achievements, the American city, and the state of savagery, brutality, and superstition exemplified by Skull Island.

During the Depression years, however, New York City was an object of fear. Americans were suspicious of dishonest goings-on in this amalgam of technological know-how, racial and national heterogeneity, and pressure-cooker environment. Municipal scandals in 1931 and the commentary on them prompted *The New Republic* to consider the causes of the dislike of the metropolis. New York could be attacked on a number of fronts: it was the major concentration of unassimilated immigrants; the center of American culture—including "demoralizing" books and plays; and the focal point of America's 'money power."[9] "For it is true," writes *The New Republic*, "that most of the little group of men who wield the bulk of America's economic power live in New York, and the rest are closely connected with the city. Nowhere else does encrusted wealth display itself with so much arrogance, nowhere is the contrast between rich and poor so brutally complete. In a time of depression like the present, this feeling is intensified; and it will undoubtedly grow, as the centralization of power and wealth becomes more complete."[10]

The films of the Depression often reflected this ambivalent attitude of Americans towards New York. As Andrew Bergman has pointed out: ". . .if Americans longed for and loathed this dreamy and abrasive place, such contradictory impulses were only fostered and reinforced by the city conjured by Hollywood."[11] The New Yorkers portrayed in *King Kong* are clichés known to film audiences of the time. They are, Bergman says, "lifted straight from the casting files used by the newspaper-lawyer-politico films. . ."[12] that achieved popularity in the early 1930s.

The New Yorker portrayed in *King Kong* is, then, "other"; other in some of the same ways as Ann, the island natives, and Kong himself. When Kong breaks down the theatre walls and enters the city, New York itself becomes a stage. The final scenes of *King Kong* are a spectacle, but one which no longer is carefully composed within the framework of Denham's directorial power. This final spectacle is not representation which dominates and imposes itself on reality; it is, rather, the reverse. The laws of representation cannot control this brute reality—so gigantesque that it is unreality itself—that is Kong. The substance of this reality is not one fashioned by human beings, but the raw force of nature itself, a force which remains unexplained.

Such a mechanism, where the laws of representation controlled by humans are crushed by the weight of a natural force, reflects the most fun-

damental process of displacement operative in *King Kong*. During the 1930s, American economists shuddered in disbelief and shock before the crisis. Their explanation was a refusal, or inability, to explain, for they regarded the Depression as a slip-up of nature, rather than the logical result of capitalism:

> With the onset of the Great Depression, we enter a period which bourgeois economists, with a rare approach to unanimity, have come to regard as a sharp deviation from the country's normal and natural historic path.[13]

Even the big businessmen themselves professed—conveniently, one might add—an inability to comprehend:

> Genuine capitalists, like the Mellons, had no explanation or remedy for the Depression, and when Congressional committees and reporters asked them they genuinely felt that business conditions were beyond analysis or cure by the hand of man.[14]

Stagnation did not fall from the skies onto 1930s America, however, for such tendencies are inherent to the laws of monopoly capitalism. The American Depression was not the exception, but rather the rule.

> Here for the first time we get a crystal-clear view of the system operating with a minimum of external stimula for an extended period of time, laying bare what Marx called its 'law of motion' for all to see. What economists persist in regarding as a deviation was in fact the realization in practice of the theoretical norm toward which the system is always tending.[15]

If the economic reality of capitalism was "laid bare" during the Depression, however, it was a reality so filtered through an ideological web that it was read as a reality of an incomprehensible natural, rather than social order. Marx referred to such a process as one aspect of fetishism, that is, the misreading of the development of value, productive activity, and products within capitalist society as the activities of inanimate objects rather than those of human beings. Within this process, according to Marx,

> . . . the interrelations, due to the world market, its conjunctures, movements of market prices, periods of credit, industrial and commercial cycles, *alternations of prosperity and crisis*, appear to [humans] as over-

whelming natural laws that irresistibly enforce their will over them and confront them as blind necessity.[16]

It is within this process as well that the most pervasive function of spectacle within *King Kong* resides. The brutality of the economic order is constantly displaced in the film in the form of a spectacle device where observer and observed exist in a thinly disguised relationship of master and slave. And in the final scenes of this spectacle, New York City becomes a theatre for the playing out of a capitalist fantasy, the essence of which is simple but insidious: an economic order is enclosed, not in the savagery of a handful of human beings, but in the basic savagery of nature itself.

Judith Mayne is an Assistant Professor of Comparitive Literature at Ohio State University.

Notes

1. I would like to thank the Center for 20th Century Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee which supported this research. During the fall semester, 1975, the Center sponsored a collective research project on *King Kong* in which Thierry Kuntzel and myself participated; several other people were also involved, in particular Robert Dickey and Maureen Turim. Kuntzel's study of *King Kong*, unpublished at the time of this writing, explores many of the points raised in this essay in the direction of psychoanalysis and semiotics, and has been extremely provocative and valuable to me.

2. See Jean Paul Fargier, "La paranhese et le detour," *Cinethique*, no. 5 (January-February 1970), 45-55.

3. "*King Kong*: Race, Sex and Rebellion," *Jump Cut* no. 6 (March-April 1975), p. 9.

4. Henrietta Sperry Ripperger, "The Forgotten Woman," *Ladies' Home Journal*, August 1933, p. 24.

5. Cited in Andrew Bergman, *We're in the Money*, New York: Harper & Row, 1972, p. 49. Original edition: New York University Press, 1971.

6. See Bergman, *op. cit.*, chapter four; and in particular, Marilyn Campbell, *The Image of Fallen Women in American Film, 1931-33*, Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1972.

7. I have dispensed with a presentation of the theoretical concepts of displacement and condensation since Charles Eckert, in his analysis of *Marked Woman* (*Film Quarterly*, vol. 27 no. 2, Winter 1973-74, 10-24) does so more than adequately. The present study has been greatly influenced by Eckert's analysis, both in terms of the mechanisms of displacement and condensation, and of the relationship of socio-economic context to cultural objects.

8. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, New York: New American Library, 1961, p. 24.

9. "They Hate New York," *New Republic*, May 20, 1931, pp. 4-5.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
11. Bergman, p. 20.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
13. Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital*. London: Penguin, 1970, p. 233. Original edition: Monthly Review Press, 1966.
14. Caroline Bird, *The Invisible Scar*. New York: Pocket Books, 1967, p. 208. Original edition: David McKay, 1966.
15. Baran and Sweezy, p. 235.
16. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. III, New York: International Publishers, 1967, p. 831.

INTRODUCING NARRATOLOGY TO FILM STUDENTS—VIA "CITIZEN KANE"

Seymour Chatman

1. The general relation of semiotics to narrative structure.
   a. Hjelmslev's four-fold division of semiotic structures is useful for representing the structure of narratives:

	Content	*Expression*
Substance	i. Continuum of representations of objects and actions in the real world that can be imitated in a narrative medium, as inherited by the author through the codes of his society.	ii. Media insofar as they can communicate stories (media are generally semiotic systems in their own right)
Form	iii. Narrative Story components: 1. Events 2. Existents and their connections	iv. Narrative Discourse (the structure of narrative transmission) consisting of elements shared by narratives in any medium whatsoever

   b. Example: a simple-minded narrative: "John worked for UCB. He fell ill. He died. No one attended his funeral." As illustrative of the above—i.e., The imitation of objects in the real world which we know through traditional codes: Men (through "John," a man's name, as opposed to women, animals, etc.), working (again known through the code of human activities, as opposed to playing, etc.), universities (an institution of learning, as opposed to insurance companies; identified here by initials, which is another code, etc.)

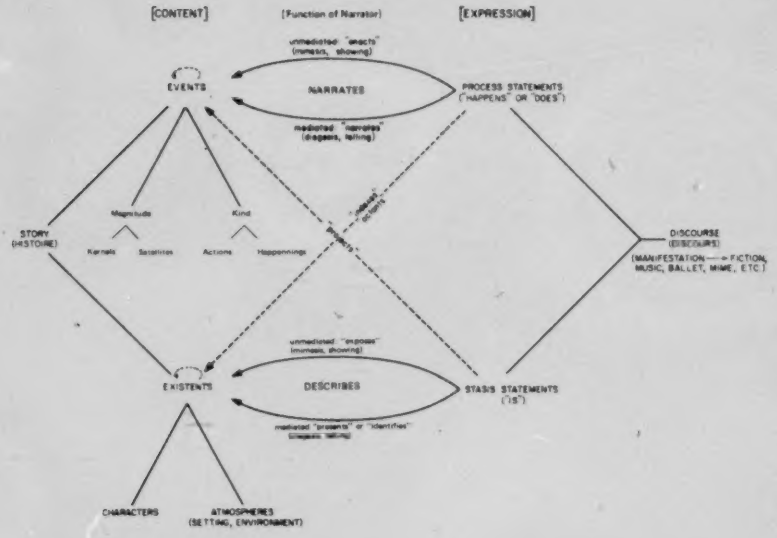
ii. These are communicated here through the verbal medium, hence it is a putative *literary* narrative (quality aside); they could have been communicated through other media: a mime-show (a man playing "John," making motions like "work," in a set that imitated a college office or the like), a film, a ballet, a comic-strip—in short, any means by which a story can be told.

iii. The story is the "chrono-logic" (i.e., the text whose coherence inheres in a temporal-causal principle) connecting the existent John with the existent UCB (the former a "character," the latter an element of "setting") through the event "work"—in this case an iterative function, i.e., the action is one which is repeated, albeit under different aspects (e.g., John at the filing cabinet, John at the typewriter, etc.).

iv. Narrative discourse—the structure which all representations of story through media inform: the narrative presented here, for example, is *shown* (rather than *told*) by an effaced narrator's voice. If any expression occurred which suggested the actual presence of a narrator, we would have to recognize *overt* rather than covert narration—(e.g., "John worked for UCB, *as I remember it,*" or even "He died, *unfortunately*."). In a film, *showing* would entail the simple representation of the above events, with perhaps a montage sequence to represent the iterative quality of the event "worked." But if overt narration were desired, a voice-over or the like would additionally be required.

2. The unfortunately formidable-looking diagram presents a conspectus of the various relations between *story* and *discourse* in the abstract (i.e., without any particular relation to embodiment or manifestation by a specific medium). Here is an explanation of its symbols:

a. The two basic components of the narrative are depicted on the extreme left and right. *Story* is the formal content element, *discourse* the formal expression element. The discourse is said to *state* the story, and these statements are either *process* or *stasis* statements. These are the abstract predicates of the narrative statement corresponding to the assertion that something happened or that it merely existed in the story. Events are not particular acts but an abstract formulation of any possible story-act; nor does "statement" refer to actual words in English; kissing and "kissing" are rather the substance of the content and expression, respectively (an "actual" kiss on the screen is also, like the word "kiss," a piece of the substance of the expression). Stasis statements are in the mode of IS (not the English word "is" but the abstract semi-



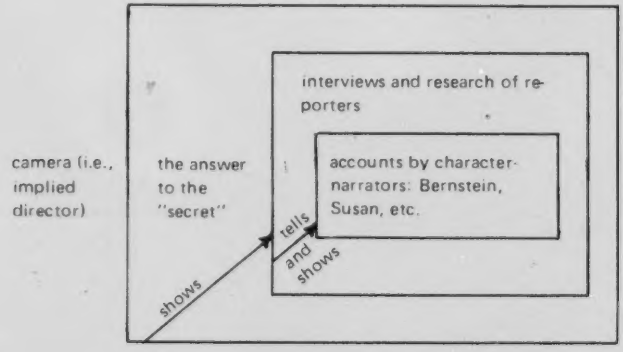
otic or narrative dimension of existence as opposed to action), just as process statements are in the mode of DOES (or where a character is patient, not agent, HAPPENS TO). A text requires some action if it is to be a narrative; if none occurs, it is only a description, expository text (sermon, legal brief, eulogy), or the like; however, the statement need not be explicit. Existent, that is, stasis statements can imply action statements ("John is a murderer" implies "John has killed someone"), and vice versa ("John murdered someone" implies "John is a murderer"). This is indicated by the broken lines in the diagram that go diagonally from stasis statements to events and process statements to existents.

b. A process statement is said either to *recount* or *enact* an event according to whether or not it is presented (mediated) explicitly by a narrator (the lower solid line from process statement to event). Correspondingly, a stasis statement is either unmediated, that is, *exposes* existents (upper solid line) or *presents* or *qualifies* them, according to whether the narrative element is existential or descriptive (lower solid line). A stasis statement that implies

an event is said to *project* it (rising broken diagonal line), while a process statement that implies an existent is said to *index* it (falling broken diagonal line). Finally, there is a *self-embedding* function to any event or existent: one will tend to imply at least another. If a man murders he tends also to flee from the police; if a woman is extremely poor she tends to be thin, and so on; this function is indicated by broken-line loops from event and existent back to themselves.

3. Example of the theory as applied to *Citizen Kane*.
   a. The *story* of *Citizen Kane*—in the semiotic sense defined above—is the set of events in their natural order that transpire in the life of the newspaper tycoon Charles Foster Kane, from the first time he is seen, the young son of a poor family in Colorado, 1870, through his sudden inheritance of a great fortune, rise to fame as a newspaper publisher, ill-fated love-life, to his death alone in the Florida castle of Xanadu—*plus* the set of events immediately after Kane's death constituting the inquiry by a news conglomerate into the "meaning" of his death—*plus* the events that follow the failure of the inquiry, and the burning of the sled "Rosebud," symbol of his lost childhood.
   b. The *discourse* of *Citizen Kane*:
      1. Authority:

         The story of Kane could simply have been shown in one continuous flow. The director decided instead to both tell it and show it, utilizing *authority* (the "truth" and profundity of insights into the story) as part of the narrative. This resulted in a doubly embedded depiction:



That is to say, each character-narrator gives a partial account of the whole story, generally that part to which he was an eyewitness; following a standard convention, we are given the account first by seeing him tell the beginning to Thompson, the reporter, and then there is the usual transition to the images of the "events themselves"—here the camera is functioning as a kind of metaphoric tool *of* the narrator: it literally visualizes the narrator's words. This is the innermost box. The intermediate box is the story not of Kane but of the *search* for Kane, the story of Thompson's interviews in hopes of discovering the secret of his last word. Thus, what is discourse to the innermost story becomes itself a story; here the story is discoursed by camera images alone—no one tells the story of Thompson's interviews—they are simply shown. But they are shown within a discourse which is itself the *whole* story, including the solution to the enigma. Here the camera is no longer the device by which either the narrators recount their stories, nor the device by which Thompson's story is recounted, but rather that by which the story of what no one in either the two embedded stories can ever know, what only we and the director know.

2. Discourse time and story time.

Discourse time is the time that it takes to tell or show a story; story time is the time that it took the events in the story to transpire. The discourse time of *Citizen Kane* is the running time of the film, 119 minutes; the story time is the seventy years or so of his life and the few weeks of the inquiry after his death. The discourse presents the story time in fragments, following, generally, the principle of the character-narrator's relations with Kane: thus, Thatcher's account consists of three segments widely separated in time: the initial encounter of Thatcher and the boy Kane, the later conflict between Thatcher as entrepreneur and Kane as crusading publisher, and finally the meeting to discuss the bankruptcy proceedings of the Inquirer chain and other Kane interests. Summary (where short discourse time must account for a long story time) is handled not only elliptically (as above) but also by montage sequences, for instance the famous swish-pan treatment of the dissolution of Kane's first marriage over the breakfast table. Order (flashback) is also a consideration of time.

3. Point of view.
   The difference between point of view and voice is complex and not widely understood—it will need discussion.

Seymour Chatman is a Professor in The Department of Rhetoric at The University of California, Berkeley.

Some Books and Articles to Read

Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (N.Y.: Hill and Wang, 1964)
Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1975)
Umberto Eco, *Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1976)
Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema* (Mague: Mouton, 1974)
Christian Metz, *A Semiotics of the Cinema: Film Language* (N.Y.: Oxford, 1974)
Gianfranco Bettetini, *The Language and Technique of the Film* (Hague: Mouton, 1973)
Laffay, Albert, *Logique du cinema* (Paris: Masson, 1964)
Genette, Gerard, *Figures III* (Discours du recit) (Paris: Seuil, 1973)
Screen, XIV (Spring, Summer, 1973)
Film Reader, I (1975), "Semiotics and Citizen Kane," 9-54
Chatman, Seymour, "Towards a Theory of Narrative," *New Literary History,* VI (1975), 295-318

A CINEMATICS MODEL FOR FILM STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Paul Sharits

An important, thoroughly independent, and personal art cinema exists, despite the conspicuous absence of a viable language through which this cinema could be discussed and thereby be more deeply understood. This is not to say that attempts at discussion of the independent cinema have not been made; however, a diagnosis of these attempts most often reveals a deep rupture between the structures of the films and the structures of conventional language modes. This structural rupture is traceable, in part, to typical art school and film school curriculums, which tend to reinforce "naturally learned" (non-selfcritical) behavioral and cognitive habits.

During my more than eight years of teaching various art-making, art-thinking, and art-historical courses, I have noted with distress that most students have enormous difficulty in experiencing-regarding-discussing their worlds in dynamic terms; these students tend to force rationalistic-static ("everyday," grammatically linear) patterns over dynamic fields ("poems," "paintings,"[1] et al.) and then wonder why they make so little progress in their growth as artists. This problem of having largely static sensibilities becomes acute when the students approach cinema, with its often intricate modulations of temporality, spatiality, and logical or fictive structure. For most students, there exist only two basic, crudely divided senses of time—"normal" linear-metric, and "psychological" time; corresponding to this simple Cartesian view, students often have likewise limited conceptions of spatiality and of the potentially multidimensional levels of narrative and non-narrative order relations. What I am calling "cinematics" amounts to an attitude which is both critical of natural-naive conceptions of cinema and which is insistently open to new definitions of the film-viewing and film-making enterprise. This cinematics attitude can gen-

erate a comprehensive curriculum which is centered around a cinema of exploration and which has the thrust at its every point of opening up for continual reexamination its premises and objects of research—cinematics naturally supports a milieu wherein change is normative. Dr. Gerald O'Grady, Chairperson of the SUNY at Buffalo Center for Media Study, after having read the first draft of this paper,[2] directed my attention to Robert Graves' "In Broken Images," a poem which forcefully expresses the kind of analytic research attitude which forms the vortex of this cinematics orientation:

> He is quick, thinking in clear images;
> I am slow, thinking in broken images.
>
> He becomes dull, trusting to his clear images;
> I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images.
>
> Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;
> Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.
>
> Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact;
> Questioning their relevance, I question the fact.
>
> When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;
> When the fact fails me, I approve my senses.
>
> He continues quick and dull in his clear images;
> I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.
>
> He in a new confusion of his understanding;
> I in a new understanding of my confusion.

My usage of the term "cinematics" may seen problematical[3] and its genesis should be explained. In a paper entitled "Words Per Page" (*Afterimage* No. 4, Autumn, 1972), first presented as an introduction to a course in film production at Antioch College in 1970, I suggested that the term "cinematics" replace "cinema" so that the analytical mode of work/thought I was suggesting to the students would be emphasized. The term was suggested to me by the term "linguistics." I did not fully develop the model in that initial paper; in this paper I intend to more adequately define the concept and suggest its operational application to film instruction on the college level.

Because the cinema, as documentation, sociology, entertainment, or art, normatively involves a "communicative" function, it is not surprising that metaphoric phrases such as "language of film," "grammar of film," and the like are appealing. It should be made clear that while my use of the term "cinematics" was suggested by the term "linguistics," I do not intend to make any isomorphic transpositions. Still, "linguistics"—because

it is not "language" but "the science of language," and because, as a methodology, it offers innumerable morphological, syntactical, and semantic tactics applicable to film composition and comprehension—is a more exacting term than "language" and "grammar." In "Words Per Page" I stated:

> The word "language," with its muddled definitions, is a worse point of departure for an understanding of human communication than is the more precise concept of "linguistics." Perhaps the vague term "cinema" should be abandoned with all its anthropomorphic, pseudopsychological presuppositions and, instead, the less fashionable term "cinematics" should be used as a base for our fresh systems. A lot could be gained from a study of linguistics if one wished to build a comprehensive and usable "cinematics" model. As a process, film is related to language in that both are, on many levels, linear systems; for example, "the sound wave emanating from the mouth of a speaker is physically a continuum" (Bertil Malmberg, *Structural Linguistics and Human Communication*, Berlin: Springer Verlag, 1967 p. 66)—this is easily demonstrated by looking at the way speech is patterned on an optical soundtrack of film. Ferdinand de Saussure pointed out: "The signifier, being auditory, is unfolded solely in time from which it gets the following characteristics: (a) it represents a span, and (b) the span is measurable in a single dimension; it is a line" (Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1959, p. 70). And Malmberg added: "A structure, according to everyday usage, is made up of parts or elements having a certain mutual relationship, as opposed to a mere accumulation of mutually independent items. If human language is said to be structured, this should be understood in such a way that any language is built up of so called discrete elements (i.e., sharply delimited from each other and without any possible gradual passage from one to the other). Language consequently is analysable into minimal independent units, which are restricted in number and the functions of which are determined by their relations to the other units with which they are combined, within a system of communication possibilities (a paradigm) and within the actual speech sequence, the chain (or the syntagm). . . If linguistics is called structural, this consequently implies that its main concern is the description and analysis of its functional units (its discrete elements) and of the relationship between "these" (*Structural Linguistics*, pp. 5-6). We see that it is highly problematic which of these parameters of "cinema" can be legitimately regarded as "elements"; in fact it is clear that our definition of what we shall regard as "morphemes" and "phonemes" will predetermine what paradigms we can create.

Despite the rich analogues interfacing cinematics and linguistics, it is wise to make emphatic that cinematics is not subsumed under linguistics. Roman Jakobson, in his notable attempt to locate "poetics" (which deals with the question, "What makes a verbal message a work of art?") integrally within linguistics, points out that a case could be made that linguistics is not an inclusive enough system to deal with poetics: "In short, many poetic features belong not only to the science of language but to the whole theory of signs, that is, to general semiotics. This statement, however, is

valid not only for verbal art but also for all varieties of language since language shares many properties with some other systems of signs or even with all of them (pansemiotic features)."[4]

If we accept the concept that linguistics is a subset of semiology, it is obvious that a purely linguistic base for cinematics is untenable. Even an area so deeply influenced by linguistic models as "structuralism," another methodology important to a general cinematics, has in recent years shifted away from linguistics:

> Linguistics had for some time provided a leitmotif orchestrated in the works of Barthes, Lacan, and Lévi-Strauss. It was said of linguistics that it should have provided a theoretical methodological model and a universal matrix for understanding all human phenomena (at least at the interpersonal level) . . . [but] . . . structural linguistics itself unknowingly perpetuated the Hegelian inheritance. . . . Foucault's apocalyptic announcement in *The Order of Things* of the imminent disappearance of *Man* restated the necessity of renouncing the burden of our Hegelian metaphysical heritage while situating us this side of its crepuscular horizon. And his proclamation that the last man is both younger and older than the death of God states succinctly the inevitable relationship that such an enterprise has to Nietzsche's. Nietzsche has now come to occupy the central position that . . . was held by the Gallic Hegel.[5]

Nicolas Ruwet, writing of linguistics and poetics, makes an even more specific statement:

> We are not only interested in carefully separating the object of poetics from that of linguistics; we must also remember that structural linguistics represents only a movement—now in the past, since the development of generative grammar—in the history of linguistics . . . . I will add that there still exists, on a different level, a real danger, one which lies in the development of a 'structuralist aesthetic.' By this I mean the tendency, against which we should protect ourselves, to ascribe undue value to those few features—among all of the possible aspects of a work of art—which we are now able to describe with a certain rigor through terms drawn from the concepts of structural linguistics.[6]

It should perhaps be pointed out, since confusions still exist, that the "structuralist aesthetic" that Ruwet mentions and, for that matter, all of what has been discussed as "structuralism" in this paper, is not at all related to P. Adams Sitney's well-known designation of the phrase "structural cinema," to what he sees as a class of related films made in the middle and late 1960s ("Structural Cinema," *Film Culture* 47, Summer 1969). In conversation and correspondence I have come to know that Sitney fundamentally disagrees with traditional structuralism; he regards traditional structuralism as a "repugnant academic discipline." Sitney's concern with the blandness

of much academic thinking is easy to share. Nevertheless, structuralism has demonstrated its not-so-bland capacity for continual self-reorganization, exhibiting a high-spirited openness which makes it valuable to cinematics.

What follows in this paper is a discussion of some of the problems involved in discussing contemporary film art; an explanation of the kinds of film (and video) making courses which complement the cinematics model; and an overview of various approaches to historical and theoretical courses which can form the armature of a cinematics curriculum. This viewpoint is evolved from personal experiences in filmmaking and film teaching. Thus, the paper is not at all intended to be a strict blueprint; it is open for expansion, revision, and clarification.

There is a history of the kind of independent film art considered to be of central importance in this paper. In the 1920s, a number of "experimental" ("avant-garde") film works were made, primarily by European painters and sculptors. These works challenged works being made by commercial producers; already, in various degrees and styles, the normative linear-time plotting and the illusionary three-dimensional spatiality of the "feature" film were seriously being complicated. However, these impressive art films were not widely appreciated, and no branch of art criticism or area of university study was developed to accommodate their new articulations of time/motion/space. Only in Russia, where "formal-minded" filmmaking existed during the 1920s in the "feature-length" mode, were there developed systematic, theoretic frames of reference which dealt with non-typical film forms (Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Vertov); problematically, "montage" theories, as interesting and inventive as they were, were interwoven with political conceptions which are less compelling and appropriate today than they were for Russia during the first post-revolutionary decade. A resurgence of art filmmaking occurred in America after World War II but it was only during the middle 1960s, when a large enough body of significant works existed, that the "New American Cinema" was finally recognized as more than an "underground" (seedy, nihilistic) movement. Only the journal *Film Culture* has been consistently critically supportive of the new cinema; no real recognition of the importance of the new work was given by the academic world. Toward the end of the 1960s, some private art institutes attempted to integrate experimental film studies into their curriculums but, for the most part, could not or would not adequately budget these areas and most such programs have basically failed. In the early 1970s, the situation had radically changed: established art journals began to publish art film criticism and a few large universities developed properly financed art film programs. In spite of these hopeful developments, a coherent and

sophisticated language about film has not evolved at the same rate as the ever-advancing new cinema: more and more artist-filmmakers are teaching, and so the problem may resolve itself in time. Nevertheless, there is not much communication between filmmakers regarding their teaching approaches, and it is hard to estimate congruities of approaches, if indeed any exist at all; there appears to be even less interchange between film artists and film critics on this level (consequently, most criticism seems less than inspired).

Forced to dismiss normative, literary, and psychological film theories, just where can one look for models of understanding a cinema which is not primarily narrative or dramatic? A number of filmmakers whose work is under discussion formerly were painters or photographers, and a number of the critics currently interested in their work were critics of abstract art. It is noteworthy that during the 1950s and 1960s a relatively successful vocabulary ("formalism") was employed by critics of painting and sculpture. It was a mode which bypassed the artists' intentions, dismissed "poetic" interpretations, and focused on apt description of the art object; the aim was a certain discreet "objectivity." Recently this form of discussing "static" art objects has been used in criticism of independent films; while the intelligence and rigorousness of this approach is laudable, this writing, when applied to film, reads more like a description of a series of connected paintings than as an explication of a unified temporal structure, the film "object." After years of the "poetic" indulgences of normative film criticism, clever as it often was, it is a pleasure reading the level-headed descriptive analysis of the formal-oriented critics; however, the built-in assumptions of many of these current analyses, based in non-moving and non-temporal art object structural logic, undercuts their fine intentions.

Are there descriptive languages of transformation which are applicable to film? Both calculus and the theory of information (mathematical communication theory) are rooted in mapping dynamic systems; Piaget's interpretation of structuralist analysis makes transformation a cardinal assumption; and a case might even be made for including some aspects of cybernetics as relevant to filmic consciousness. Until the middle 1960s, the vocabularies of poetry and music, evolved over centuries to deal with transformation, proved helpful as models for discussions of independent cinema. But, with the emergence of analytical, ontological, epistemological, and information-oriented works, these two strategies appear relatively non-applicable. An argument could be made for the relevance of certain composers' works and theories—e.g., those of John Cage and Iannis Xenakis,

as well as those younger composers, Steve Reich, Phil Glass, and La Monte Young, whose work has a curious resemblance to the film works under discussion—except that most cinema involves both a music-like concreteness and non-musical semantic information (Rosalind Krauss has made a strong case for the sense of non-copresence experienced in perceiving photography and film,[7] and Annette Michelson, borrowing from Peirce's icon-index-symbol semiology, convincingly locates photography and film within both indexical and iconic sign levels.)[8] Seen in the light of film's semantic information, poetry might appear more related to cinema than music; yet film's referential icon and index character is not necessarily symbolic, if we accept Peirce's distinctions between sign types. Given these problems, how can a curriculum guide students into truly filmic discourses? Before approaching this most difficult question, an important premise and its implications should be explored: the relation theory is to have with practice.

It seems reasonable to suggest that for a student of film to make valuable contributions to the art, either by way of making new works or by critical discourse, the student must have a grasp of both technical and theoretical problems particular to what is being designated here as the art of film. It should be made clear at this point that a continual balance of theoretical inquiry and actual film making is integral to a cinematics curriculum and that an undergraduate should not be forced to specialize in either one or the other mode. Following this logic, it is important to suggest a larger curriculum which would support and complement an art-oriented cinema-studies area. Art schools which exist totally autonomous from liberal arts colleges cannot properly fulfill these requirements, as they most usually have incomplete and/or poor "non-art" curriculums; I make this statement after having taught in an art institute for three years and from several years of making extensive lecture-screenings in art schools in America and Europe. In part, the failure of art schools to support the new art of personal cinema is due to economic difficulties beyond the control of these institutions. What is most distressing is the chronic conservativism of the typical art school; I believe this is due to dependence upon style (rather than upon thought) in "free-wheeling" art school contexts. Styles in art naturally change when the thought bases which they manifest shift-grow, but many art schools, because they are often overspecialized and removed from larger social concerns, attempt to sustain curriculums in the image of their faculties' own styles. These are the reasons I felt compelled to leave the art school context. In 1970 I began developing Antioch College's film program, which I believed could succeed because the range and variety of "non-art" stimulation afforded students of film art in that context was vast in relation

to what could be afforded them in art schools. The program did succeed, in a way which it could not have in an art school; it is a healthy and productive program, now in the very able hands of the film artist, Tony Conrad. My interest in joining the new Center for Media Study at the State University of New York at Buffalo was founded on the premise that SUNY's larger and more diverse resources could even more intensely facilitate students' development of cinematic consciousness. The resources and enthusiasm at SUNY at Buffalo seem capable of not only developing a viable cinema program but a comprehensive temporal media program, including video studies.

Aside from normal liberal arts requirements, I believe it is helpful for the film art student to take courses in: psychology (social and perceptual); psychophysiology; semiology; linguistics; mathematics; information sciences; computer programming; art history; poetics; literary studies; theatre studies; music theory; studio art courses; electronics; physics; natural sciences; and, above all, philosophy (particularly those brances of operational philosophy dealing with generalistic-interdisciplinary modes, such as general systems).

A media study center would be incomplete without extensive studies in: film history (experimental cinema, documentary, classics of the feature film); video history; film criticism (the modes of criticism which have been used, are being used, and could be used in interpreting and evaluating various modes of filmmaking); video criticism; media teaching modes; film analysis (viewing-discussion courses); video analysis; and, of course, film and video making courses. All of these general courses can take a multitude of different formats; variation and even contradiction are essential for a dynamic, open, and self-organizing system.

Pursuing the conception of an integrated theory-practice situation, a further premise suggests itself: that students simultaneously study both modes with the same filmmaker-teacher. The reason for this is opposite to the not-unheard-of tendency of some teachers to indoctrinate students. Ideally, the teacher, by splitting his functions into two contexts, can at once be open to and respecting of student-defined forms of enterprise in studio courses as well as being free, in the theory context, to elucidate his own thoughts and others' thoughts on what constitutes an aesthetics of film. The teacher furthers the student's growth by having empathy with the student's unique motives (helps the student discover these motives) and, on the other hand, by presenting new thoughts to the student, thereby clarifying and/or challenging the student's own conceptions. The teacher need not suppress his unique formulations in order to guide the student toward self-realization. Seen in this light, it is obvious that to force "theo-

ry" into "practice" situations would be to distract the student from organic, creative growth. Cinematics cannot be simply a system of perceiving and regarding cinema, but should be likened to a multidimensional field of inquisitiveness, wherein relativistic-probablistic attitudes coexist with more axiomatic views. Flexibility and humor facilitate serious engagement. Certainly some basic principles, shared by all those engaged in a research mode, would also seem necessary—yet, the search for such principles is much of the substance of research itself and so definitive principles are difficult to form (perhaps it is this that lends the task its richness and seductiveness). Many different modes of method, thought, and form can be integrally subsumed in a general cinematics process-frame (e.g., the often-stated differentiations between "narrative" and "non-narrative" are not to be regarded as conclusive—so many ironic and straightforward convolutions of these "disparate polarities" have been woven into convincing films that to think of them as distinct categories is now impossible). The most basic principle of cinematics, its very vortex, is that student and teacher share the analytic research attitude; exploratory, experimental behavior is of higher value than any specific methodological stance or any specific designation of acceptable content. Still, works and theories exhibiting experimental-analytical concerns form the most compelling research area. (Note that "research," in this context, refers both to "study," and to "creative work.") What might distinguish this approach from scientific approaches is that no solution to the issues raised is necessarily postulated; attitude and behavior—"process"—are more important than conclusiveness.

There are probably innumerable ways in which a research frame of reference can manifest itself in film and video making courses. However, there exists one approach which is as damaging to creative development as it is common to normative filmmaking courses; this is the approach which overstresses technical "professionalism," assuming the innate correctness of whatever (arbitrary) school of thought it follows. The appeal of this approach is evident: it easily gratifies the students' desire for absolutes and it relieves the instructors from confrontation with the individual student's actual needs as a unique creator. It is interesting that most of the film artists who are presently teaching filmmaking courses never had "formal" technical training in film. When deciding upon what my graduate school education should be, I consciously and morally rejected "studying film" in what were then the existing "film-study" programs, even while firmly realizing that I would pursue cinema as my life work—these programs were and are destructive to personal expression. I would suggest that no program be based upon traditional (i.e , ultimately "commercial")

technical production models. This fact—that my potential as a film creator would have been damaged by traditional technical film studies—has motivated me to search out a means of teaching film without destroying the individual student's unique capabilities and inventiveness. It would have been helpful to me to have had some technical training, if it could have been in a creativity-oriented context. As it was, I had to learn the simple facts from very painful experience. This waste of time, I believe, is avoidable, but it is not easily avoidable. The program which avoids destruction of individuality while providing the student with basic skills is no casual matter; this problem forms the core of my suggestions for a curriculum.

While traditional, "professional" techniques and procedures should not be the core of introductory filmmaking courses, some of these techniques are valuable for the student to know from the beginning. These techniques should presumably be presented in logical-pragmatic progression but should not be permeated with an air of being "fundamental"; these techniques should be regarded both as simply operational and as having some organic relation to the unique motives which arise for the student as a whole human being and artist. This apparently paradoxical proposition does not disclose a hopelessly impossible conception. The Bauhaus, with at least some small success, faced such a task and something from the Bauhaus concern with "the whole man" must be somehow applicable to our problem. The easiest solution may be found in having the student begin his studies in a protocinema framework so that the subsequent technical developments of cinema proper would naturally suggest themselves, before being presented in the introductory filmmaking course.

Another sort of course which might be of value is one in which the broadest investigation of the documentary-recording functions of cinema would be undertaken, without any particular stylistic goals being stressed. Rather than stressing the typical social and/or anthropological approach, attention would be given to film's pure indexical structures (light types, lenses, emulsions) and procedures (microcinematography, photospectrometry, time lapse, thermography, "Kirlian" or radiation field cinematography, etc.). The use of fluorescent, ultraviolet, polarized, infrared, laser, x-ray and other radiation systems would be experimentally studied in their image forming relations with variously sensitized film stocks. The iconic and symbolic limits and implications of recording-projecting should be the ongoing center of discussion in such a course; the large danger that such a course could become purely technical and sterile would have to be continually, consciously checked. Technical, perceptual, and conceptual dimensions should be reflected back and forth among each other at each level of study. In recent years, a great deal of the most interesting art has

in some way or another interfaced with scientific and/or philosophic investigations, in either subjects or techniques. There is no reason why this tendency could not find a secure place in a cinematics curriculum.

Video-making courses would be pursued in a manner which would explore imagery and techniques that are implicit in the structure-function of video as a perceptual and physical system. Students might even be required to work with both film and video; these mediums obviously share characteristics but it is important that students study their many differences. One way the crucial differences of these media could become explicit is by developing a course in which the student would transpose imagery back and forth between the mediums, attempting a balanced hybridic synthesis while also noticing and emphasizing the transformation of the imagery which would occur at each stage of such an interplay.

As mentioned before, at intermediate and advanced film-study and film-making levels, more and more complex recording systems should be presented and explored for their imagistic potentials, while, simultaneously, the student should also be encouraged to follow deep personal inclinations. However, a flexible curriculum will also respect the value of some more structured courses; if the artist-teacher is personally intent on deeply exploring a particular system, it is obvious that, properly presented, the course of this investigation could be profitably followed by students—probably the students' work could also be of aid to the artist-teacher. The artist who teaches knows full well how much these two roles often interface and at times become indistinguishable. It is possible that this can cause confusion and distress to everyone concerned, the teacher, the students, and the administrators of the program. It is also possible that a wonderful symbiosis between all these elements of the general system can occur, benefiting each member of the relationship and, from this, effect a continual betterment of the system itself. Most institutions recognize this in at least one sense: the faculty, whose technically defined role is "to teach," is also encouraged, by various "faculty development awards," to go on learning and growing in their special area. Institutions with graduate programs also appoint graduate students to teachers as research and teaching assistants. This often does not work well in art departments because of displaced notions of "individualism"; this is hard to precisely define but I believe most art educators have encountered and understand this selfish form of "individualism" (which makes potentially valuable group projects in studio classes so hard to guide). The "individualism," a form of subjectivism which is usually dignified by recourse to romantic interpretations of art historical figures, is not the kind of student self-development and self-realization which can exist in a re-

search-oriented, democratically structured cinematics curriculum, where sharing is essential and a mood of friendliness is most pragmatic. An open, symbiotic system can be modelled by extending and developing the teacher's special interests into graduate level courses wherein the students can peer directly into their teacher's art making processes and expand their own abilities by participating in the creation of the teacher-artist's projects. It is assumed that the teacher's special interests and style of working are more advanced than the students' and that the teacher is a worthwhile enough artist that he has something creational to impart to the student in such a learning-by-doing situation. My own work is exploratory and expanding, not an attempt to polish more and more carefully a particular style; during the past three years I have found that by having several of my best students work with me on my projects—salaried and doing twenty to thirty hours of work a week—that these situations allow me to teach more of what I know of my art than do normative classroom situations. In working with me, the student assistant is called upon to be technically inventive and to participate in creative formulation of the project, and not just to do tedious dirty work. The student learns, in an adventurous and professional context, advanced techniques and, more abstractly, learns my modes of problem solving, scheduling, ways of organizing complex projects, and inventing alternative financial strategies, things which are impossible to impart effectively in the typical studio classroom, where I am attempting to focus my attention on the students' not-so-complex self-defined projects. The assistant can selectively draw upon this more practical knowledge in structuring his or her own life work as an artist. I have had the great pleasure of noting how my former assistants have become more serious with their own work after having worked with me; aside from the pragmatic aspects of this sort of teamwork, an increase in the enjoyment of working and a deepening of friendship with an assistant makes this relationship of central value to me, and, I believe, to the assistant as well. At this moment I have more projects and problem areas to pursue than I have time to deal with by myself in a single lifetime. I can envision a graduate level course wherein, through the help of an inquisitive class, a research assistant and a teaching assistant, I could explore these areas, presumably with the same mutual advantages that exist in my relationships with my hired student assistants.

Group work is not an innovative conception of student-teacher relationships; it has been a general practice in many research-oriented university departments and has been used where group study is normative (i.e., dance and theater). Nevertheless, group work has specific problems and probably

cannot be jumped into without some degree of gradual adjustment for both the teacher and the student. An intermediate step from personalistic to group work situations can be construed. This kind of course should not be specifically product oriented and should not be structured solely by the teacher. In the fall of 1974, I worked with a small group of advanced students in such a situation and am encouraged by the fruitfulness of this approach. The course was described as follows:

> Restricted to graduate and/or upper division undergraduate students who have already demonstrated considerable theoretical and production skills in cinema. This is not an apprenticeship situation, although the problem areas have direct and indirect relation to the instructor's thinking and filmmaking; a 'group dynamics' approach, allowing for individual creativity will be employed. In general, traditionally "non-art" areas such as mathematics, natural sciences, philosophy, linguistics, psychophysiology, and computer sciences will be explored for models relevant to cinema; in some cases, conceptual analogues will mark the end of the research but, in other cases, these analogues will be materially realized. The methodology which will be most usually employed is as follows: the instructor will outline a variety of interest areas; the student picks out a problem which is personally interesting; the student, or small teams of students, appropriately studies the problem for one or two weeks and then makes a presentation of findings, verbally or with the use of charts or other visual aids; each week, after each data presentation, the whole group responds by way of 'brainstorming' (this is the reverse of a 'critique'; everyone's intelligent speculations are taken up by the group and expanded to their furthest operational conclusions); at this point, the data is either rejected as infertile, or a need for further research is suggested, or an applicable cinematic model has been developed. In some cases, applicable models might be realized materially in the seminar context; however, in most cases, the models 'belong' to anyone in the group who wishes to use them in personal contexts.

When "film art education" is posed in these terms, one can begin to envision the transactional relation of teacher-students as a "research team"; this is in opposition to hierarchical-patriarchal interactional teaching systems which undemocratically mask the "teacher" as intrinsically superior to the "student." Observed this way, cinematics has its axiology.

The range of theoretical and historical courses which complement the kind of courses I've suggested remains to be discussed. Where does the student begin to grasp the state of his or her art? How does he or she progress towards more and more depthful and subtle understandings?

The central concern of the curriculum I am proposing is with the "avant garde" film, but this does not preclude interest in the history and theory of the normative documentary cinema and the commercial "feature-length" cinema. Certainly there are overlappings of concerns and techniques and these should be studied. As already stated, the student should have as com-

prehensive an understanding as possible of the totality of human temporal ordering. This means that traditional values and concepts should be explored if only to critique and dismiss them as too insufficient for operational usage. It would seem that a "film criticism" course would adequately explore such traditional conceptions (i.e., the theories of Bazin, Kracauer, et al.). Historical studies would concurrently round out such critiques. In these areas perhaps a semiological approach, typified by Christian Metz's *Film Language: A Semiotics of Cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), is reasonable. However, it seems unlikely that the semiological study of narrativity has much bearing on works which do not conceal their deep structures within a fictive order. Responding to and understanding non-fictive, often self-analytical works (which are the primary consideration of cinematics) presents different sets of problems. Many intellectuals of the semiological persuasion have a fondness for applying analytical models to work which does not itself exhibit analytical or experimental intentions and, indirectly, this begs the question: can what is already an analysis be fruitfully the object of analysis? This is a question too complex to be fully treated here, but it will be generally assumed that reflection upon reflection is not only possible but necessary; furthermore, all analytical models should be tested to see if they can (non-tautologically) analyze their own structures. An interesting analogy between this problem and a problem in cybernetic models of thinking exists—Frank George, Chairman of the British Bureau of Information Sciences, in discussing why certain self-reflective subroutines must be built into some computer programs, states:

> If, as seems necessary, a computer program is to show the property of being proof against 'bluffs' or indeed if it is to have the capacity to change its own goals or subgoals, it must . . . carry an internal model of its environment. This internal model must involve calibrations of the reliability of information sources, details about people and things, both in particular and in general terms.
>
> As far as bluffing is concerned, this involves the need to analyze the motives in other external human-like sources. It is, of course, obvious that these are complicated probabilistic activities and are likely to be unreliable, but this is not our present concern as such. What we are concerned with is the fact that having an internal model of the external environment also entails a model of the people in it and their characteristics. It also involves a model of the 'self,' i.e., the program must contain some representation of itself. This self-representation can be picturesquely thought of as being like the bear on the label of the treacle tin; he is holding a treacle tin in the picture and on it is a bear holding a treacle tin and so on. This is surely one aspect of consciousness and self-awareness.[9]

It is usual that a discipline is introduced to students from a historical point of view; however, there is no way of ensuring that the understanding

of any one film will occur by following chronological development of styles—in fact it is likely that this approach, used exclusively, will reinforce the "natural attitude" (atomistic categorization as a way of "knowing") and mislead the student. Historical knowledge of any area is indispensable to the serious student of that area; but, if one of the primary aims of education in film is to enable the student to develop a sense of transformational structures, then a purely rationalist, static, linear view of film will obviously obfuscate that intention. The diachronic view could be of use if it framed itself within a specifically focused thematic context (e.g., following the threads of the seminal American "psychodramatic" film form through later subjectivist manifestations to the eventual reversal of the film viewer's role, from being an observer of a protagonist's inner world to direct self-reflection during the act of observing). But the whole logic of studying art from thematic reference frames, grouping works by style characteristics—by and far the most prevalent "appreciation course" technique—could stand some scrutiny; certainly, if the student is offered this approach exclusively and from one point of view, it will be crippling to the student's individualistic growth. The student may be able to group together sets of works, which has some value, but may still not have gained a capacity to deeply experience any one work. This ability to group works together, even when done with wit and finesse, may not be of central use to the student who desires to make films. It should go without saying that both of the discussed chronological and thematic survey modes are valuable; what I am stressing is that these approaches have limitations and if they are employed exclusively one can make strong predictions that the students' education will be incomplete, perhaps in fundamental ways.

The purpose of what follows is to suggest the forms a cinematics approach might take in the aesthetic studies dimension. A basic three-level division of types of study will be described; they are described in a progressive order: interpretive cinematics, analytical cinematics, and speculative cinematics. There is not just one mode of interpretation or of analysis or of speculation so it is obvious that I am not speaking of simply three courses with fixed form and content. On the contrary, each of these three general approaches will take any number of varying emphases.

Interpretive courses are those which present and discuss works in the above-mentioned historical and/or thematic modes. While mention can be made of specific analytical methodologies, it is not the task of these courses to deeply analyze individual works. Here, the student is introduced to the longitudes and latitudes of the cinema which has been called "experimental," "poetic," "underground," "non-narrative," "psychodramatic," "per-

sonal," etc. . . . The task is to give the student an overview of the art film movement, to interpret its general tendencies, to become aware of its most important artists, and of their stated aesthetic intentions. At higher course levels, interpretive courses might intensively study a particular historical period and the relationships the films might have to other concurrent art forms; or, intensive study of a particular style (say, surrealism and automatism could be pursued; or, in-depth studies could be made of single artists who have created a significant body of work and who have had measurable influence on the development of film art.

What distinguishes analytical courses from what I am calling interpretive courses is that the films which are viewed analytically need not have any historical or stylistic connection. In fact, the works shown should be highly differentiated so that what is consistent is the testing of specific analytical modes; the search is for discovering or developing a general language, capable of application to any number of film works. The individual film—largely divorced from the contexts of its maker's intentions and its stylistic or historical relations to other films—is what is being directly attended to. Such analysis could proceed along, say, structuralist or phenomenological lines. A structuralist approach would stress the syntax of the film works while a phenomenological approach would investigate the layers of consciousness which different works elicit in viewers. I personally feel that phenomenological research should be clearly distinguished from the sort of psychoanalytical interpretation of "meaning" of content which is so typical in literature courses and in courses dealing with narrative cinema; naturally, some surrealist and psychodramatic works can be interpreted as dreamlike, but I would suggest that these films do not constitute the most appropriate kind of work for phenomenological analysis because while they "picture" the dream state and invite viewers to participate in dream logic, they do not induce a dream state in an individual viewer. Some "minimal" films, which do not guide the viewer along a narrative or a directive formal development, provide viewers with an open field within which the individual viewer can enter dreamlike states of consciousness; these synchronic films may be most appropriate to phenomenological analysis. Films which are themselves "dreams" or are dreamlike are perhaps better analyzed with structuralist tools. Either structuralist or phenomenological analysis could proceed along any number of other emphases. Within structuralism there exists a great deal of debate as to what constitutes its range of subject material and its basic methodologies (as is shown in Macksey and Donato's anthology, *The Structuralist Controversy*); the same is true in the area of phenomenology, where there exists a definitive growing away from the

seminal concepts of Husserl (as is revealed in James M. Edie's anthology *New Essays in Phenomenology*). So, we see that these areas are rich in potential applications.

From a structuralist perspective, we are concerned with the loosening of macrostructures into networks of parts, the microstructures of works. It should go without saying that one must be aware of the dangers of such atomistic probings and recall the lessons of the Gestaltists. Furthermore, the dynamics of structure should be emphasized, rather than static notions: Chomsky's transformational grammar models of surface and deep structures, Piaget's insistence on the transformational reversibility of true structures, Moles's concern with the time dimension of structures, and von Bertalanffy's definition of open systems are cardinal lessons.[10] Echoing Bertalanffy, G. J. Klir states:

> If the system exhibits a particular behavior, it must possess . . . certain properties producing the behavior. These properties will be called the *organization* of the system. Since, according to the definition given, the behavior of a system can change (from the viewpoint of local relationships), we must assume that its organization can also change. It will be of advantage to define the constant and the variable part of the organization of a system. Let us call the constant part of the organization of a system the *structure* of the system, the variable part, its *program*.[11]

Information theory is a structuralist analytical methodology. Several years ago, using Moles's *Information Theory and Esthetic Perception*, I tried to introduce the theory as part of a general "information" theme: first, in a course called "An Esthetic of Information," in which film's information potentialities were related to other recent information-oriented approaches in painting and sculpture (mathematical and conceptual art and the documenting tendencies in earthwork and body art forms); and in a course called "Structure as Information Matrices," comparisons were made between certain film forms and painting-sculpture modes which serialize, schematize, and/or use progressions, or accumulations or otherwise stress interior structure as "content" (here the "grid," which perceivers scan in "static" work and follow in certain film works—such as Hollis Frampton's *Palindrome* and Ernie Gehr's *Serence Velocity*—is a useful frame of reference).[12] More recently, my class and I followed Piaget's *Structuralism*, attempting to apply his dynamic models of structure to a wide variety of films.[13] Both the information theory and the dynamic structure models proved useful. Yet, neither approach can properly account for the subjective factors in experiencing films; so, most recently, I've attempted to adapt Edmund Husserl's phenomenological methods for film analysis situations.

What is clearly needed is a means of interfacing both the structural and phenomenological modes, preserving the strengths of each system.[14]

Phenomenology, in the most general sense, is the attempt "to limit oneself to the data which are presented in consciousness—describing rather than explaining them."[15] Husserl's phenomenology is valuable in that it posits relatively dynamic models of consciousness, especially of "internal time consciousness." His conception of "bracketing" (suspending) one's "natural attitude," and thereby accomplishing perception of one's perceiving during the act of perception, is invaluable in attempting to bridge the gaps between the structures of film and the responding self. However, Husserl's own logic is full of gaps and many of his models of perception have been superseded by the psychophysiological research of the last several decades. Many of his propositions concerning reflection, memory, imagining, pretending, etc., have been thrown into doubt. Yet, he framed many of the areas which must concern those who are involved in transformational media. It has recently been demonstrated, primarily in the area of "bio-feedback," that a large part of our awareness exists on levels not readily available to rational consciousness. An advanced course in phenomenology might be team-taught with a psychophysiologist, using instruments which would measure alterations in brainwaves, blood pressure, galvanic skin responsiveness, etc., during the act of experiencing various film and video works. The same devices could then be used to allow students to modulate music and/or video synthesizer systems according to their learned control of their previously subconscious perceptual apparatuses.[16]

In introducing speculative cinematics, some points should be made concerning the role of humor in creative work. Perhaps the tone of "objectivity" which runs through this paper will lead the reader to assume that it presents too severe a model for an art curriculum. In fact, just as there exists a great deal more humor in so-called "minimal/structural" cinema than most viewers at first recognize, there is more lightness in my views than might immediately be inferred. These views are predicated on the belief that self-development, which *does* depend on the opening and releasing of the "subjective self," does not necessarily involve neurotically morbid excesses or autistic self-indulgence, but that the individual's inner world coincide positively with external reality and social life (the "objective" dimensions); Iannis Xenakis, speaking of "metamusic," states this lucidly in criticizing current romantic-subjectivist tendencies in music:

> I shall not say, like Aristotle, that the mean path is the best, for in music—as in politics—the middle means compromise. Rather lucidity and harshness of critical thought—in other words, action, reflection, and self-transformation by the sounds

> themselves—is the path to follow. Thus when scientific and mathematical thought serve music, or any human creative activity, it should amalgamate dialectically with intuition. Man is one, indivisible, and total. He thinks with his belly and feels with his mind.[17]

The late Robert Smithson, perhaps the most outstanding earthworks artist (and author of the lovely film *Spiral Jetty*), advocated a "fourth dimensional humor," which fits well in cinematics at its highest level ("Entropy and the New Monuments," *Artforum*, June 1966). More operationally, Zen Buddhist uses of humor to bring about collapses of subjectivity into reflective embraces of objectivity are instructive to cinematics. Integral to humor is playfulness. ("To keep your art young you have to imitate animals. What do they do? They play." Constantin Brancusi.) To speculate is to play. Speculation is a natural activity in a relativistic, probabilistic world. At a certain point, where one might measure, if one could, a 180-degree shift in the angle of sensibility, the student hopefully recognizes the humor inevitably attached to a pursuit of an essentialistic cinema. This humor may or may not be a laughing matter but it certainly can be used to generate a speculative subject matter. The problem which presents itself is: how does one tell what is humorous, in distinction to what is serious but idiotic, or what is absurd but which "feels" utterly pedestrian, or what is substructurally humorous but masks itself in an attempt to remove itself from the level of joking, or what is joking without being funny? Fortunately, one is not called upon, in speculating, to be sternly comic; the alternative to rigid humor is not crystalline seriousness but an outlook aimed at what lies beyond humor and seriousness—the unthought, the undone, the unfelt. "Brainstorming" is an effective way of pursuing concepts through their possible implications, but what is an equivalent form for a group searching for what it cannot define? The most important consideration in determining the nature of what such hypothetical thinking should be is, finally, its functional outcome for the student, what will facilitate his growth when he is beyond the security of studenthood. By graduate school, the student has gained another form of security: a grasp of his subject. This means that the student can not only withstand a bit of irony, and appreciate it, but also may *need* it to loosen up what may have become for that student a premature calcification of attitude and style. Humor and seriousness may coexist in a singular pursuit or object or thought; an idea which at first appears humorous, may upon deeper reflection reveal itself as being very serious—this is the kind of irony which could be employed in construing areas for speculation. The speculation cannot be mere fantasy, innocuous toying

about. It should involve the posing of difficult questions, perhaps questions which are ultimately unanswerable but which can serve to direct the mind into realms beyond logic. Many an important artist has set for himself goals beyond what can be possibly achieved and has left for us marvelous, if not absolutely successful, tracings of his reaching ever beyond himself (one thinks of Cezanne, in his very old age, complaining endlessly that he just could not get "it" right).

Anyone who would venture to "teach" a speculative course would have to have, personally, some self-challenging unanswered (perhaps unanswerable) art questions and would have to have a willingness to share these questions with students. Curiosity about something is not strong enough to guide such a course; there must be an intensity in the wondering process to sustain it through its inevitable "dead-end" frustrations. I am interested in this kind of course because there are some questions, at the heart of my own filmmaking which at once elude me and guide me on. One of the most interesting of these questions—one which may even appear anti-cinematic and self-contradictory—is that of non-temporality in film.

Film is normatively distinguished from painting or photography insomuch as its metrically successive unfolding in the linear time continuum affords it its illusions of "actual" movement and heightened three-dimensionality. Yet, as stated before, the linear-metric or "psychological" time duality is an over-simple limitation in conceiving of orders and types of "time." "Time," being a human abstraction, can be thought of and modeled in perhaps unlimited ways.

Over the decades, numerous films have tested the normative, limited notions of time bases, most particularly the linear time base in which they are supposed to exist. One thinks immediately of narrative or narrative-like works in which plot movement or plot tension is intensified by unexpected ellipses, of those which contain compressions of some stages of their development while expanding other stages, of those which poetically suggest instantaneousness, or of those which, in a quasi-surrealist manner, play with intersections of simultaneous or incongruous times. The independent-personal cinema has almost always exhibited a depreciation of the linear time base and it would be tedious to begin listing all those works which in one way or another attempt to distort, convolute, invert, subvert, or ignore temporality. Some of these works, both those which contain traces of narrativity and those which are intentionally non-narrative, appeal to ritual-based cyclic time or to a mythic timelessness. Some of these works, notably "abstract films," do not even seem to confront the issue of temporality but simply exist as isotropic "modulating durations." However, other works

which do not seem in any way to represent or refer to temporality nevertheless do have developmental structures which formally infer or evoke the narrative "moving-towards-a-point" time base. Using the hypothetical proposition that a non-temporal cinema is possible, and searching for the means of defining what that cinema might be, why it could or should exist, will form the base of a speculative course I am planning. Not only will the history of time manipulation in cinema be explored but, pursuant to that, there will be a scanning of the history of time conceptions in philosophy and an investigation of recent psychophysiological research in the functions/structures of retentiveness, data processing, and "protentiveness" (Husserl's term) in perception and memory.[18]

My point is describing a projected course in "non-temporal" cinema is to emphasize how an apparently humorous, absurd, or paradoxical contention can lead to a serious reappraisal of the many roles a fundamental—but too often taken-for-granted—aspect of the medium can take and how such a reappraisal can provide a rich base for creative playfulness. (It should also be stated that while the notion of a non-temporal cinema can be regarded as purely speculative or ludicrous, I do believe that such a cinema is coming into existence and that it can be an entirely valid cinematic mode, despite its many ironies.)

In summation, what is being argued for in this paper is an educational milieu which allows for and encourages a synthesis of rigorous thought and independent inventiveness—a seriousness free of dogmatism. The "optimal student" is one who will graduate in possession of necessary technical and theoretical skills without being bound by them, who will utilize these skills as tools and not as ends in themselves. This intelligent and imaginative student has as much confidence in his/her sense of self as in the contents of his/her education.

Paul Sharits is a Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Notes

1. In my view, paintings and other creations which involve temporality in their making and in our experiencing of them should be regarded as "dynamic" rather than "static," even though these objects are not physically kinetic.

2. I am indebted to both Dr. Gerald O'Grady and to film critic and educator, Ms. Regina Cornwell, for their careful reading of the first draft of this paper and for their most helpful suggestions in making its final form coherent.

3. It should be pointed out that there exist strong criticisms of this usage. Hollis

Frampton and Annette Michelson make convincing arguments for the use of "film" over "cinema" when discussing certain modes of independent filmmaking (Frampton, "For a Metahistory of Film," *Artforum*, September, 1971; Michelson, "Paul Sharits and the Critique of Illusionism," *Projected Images*, Walker Art Center, 1974). "Cinematics," because it is derived from "cinema," which refers more to film's illusions of movement than it does to the imminent tangibilities of the film object, may not reflect well enough the ontological and/or epistemological orientations of the filmmaking which I wish to portray. Yet, I have not found a term which comfortably replaces "cinematics"; words such as "filmatics" seem somewhat clumsy. Also, my approach does not strictly deny the reality—in consciousness—of film's illusions of motion and spatiality.

4. Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" in Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Style in Language* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966), p. 351.

5. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato, "The Space Between—1971" in *The Structuralist Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1972), pp. xi-xii.

6. Nicolas Ruwet, "Linguistics and Poetics" in Macksey and Donato, eds., *The Structuralist Controversy*, pp. 296-297.

7. Rosalind Krauss, "Problems of Criticism, X: Pictorial Space and the Question of Documentary," *Artforum* (November, 1971).

8. Annette Michelson, "Art and the Structuralist Perspective" in *The Future of Art* (New York: Viking Press, 1970), pp. 37-59.

9. Frank George, *Models of Thinking* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970), p. 146.

10. Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965); Jean Piaget, *Structuralism* (New York: Basic Books, 1970); Abraham Moles, *Information Theory and Aesthetic Perception* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966); Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory* (New York: George Braziller, 1973).

11. G. J. Klir, *An Approach to General Systems Theory* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1969), pp. 43-44.

12. Texts which have proved helpful in comparing such ordered spatial and durational matrices were John Elderfield's "Grids," *Artforum* (May, 1972), Mel Bochner's "The Serial Attitude," *Artforum*, (December, 1967), John Coplan's *Serial Imagery* (Pasadena Art Museum, 1968), and M. Tribus and E. C. McIrvine's "Energy and Information," *Scientific American* (September, 1971).

13. Other texts useful in pursuing structuralist analyses are Richard Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero and Elements of Semiology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970); Jacques Ehrmann, ed., *Structuralism* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1970), particularly Sheldon Nodelman's "Structural Analysis in Art and Anthropology," pp. 79-93; Jack Burnham, *The Structure of Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1971); and those by Macksey and Donato and Michelson cited in footnotes 5 and 6.

14. One critique of Husserl which frames many of the problematic aspects of such an undertaking is Jacques Derrida's *Speech and Phenomena, and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

15. Quentin Lauer, *Phenomenology: Its Genesis and Prospect* (New York: Harper, 1965) p.1.

16. Readable and applicable texts for such research and experimentation include: Robert Ornstein, ed., *The Nature of Human Consciousness* (New York: Viking Press,

1974); Lloyd Kaufman, *Sight and Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); and David Shapiro, et al., ed., *Biofeedback and Self-Control 1972: An Aldine Annual on the Regulation of Bodily Processes and Consciousness* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1973).

17. Iannis Xenakis, *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Composition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 181.

18. At the onset of such a course, these provocative essays could frame the issue: Jorge Luis Borges, "A New Refutation of Time" in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings* (New York: New Directions, 1962); Hollis Frampton, "Eadweard Muybridge: Fragments of a Tesseract," *Artforum* (March, 1973), and Paul Valéry, "Time" in *Aesthetics*—Volume 13 of *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry* (New York: Pantheon, 1964), pp. 259-277. Other texts could be W. Gray Walter, *The Living Brain* (New York: Norton, 1953); Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1967); Jean Piaget, *The Child's Conception of Time* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969); Edmund Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964); R. M. Gale, ed., *The Philosophy of Time* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1967); Roman Ingarden, *Time and Modes of Being* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1964); Benjamin Lee Whorf's *Language, Thought and Reality* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1956); Robert E. Ornstein's *On the Experience of Time* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1969); and H. Yaker, H. Osmond, and F. Cheek, eds., *The Future of Time: Man's Temporal Environment* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972).

FILM AND POWER IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES[1]

Dudley Andrew

When the organization of film study is discussed on our campuses, we are essentially discussing power and possession. None of us can claim to be aloof from these impulses because our very interest in the subject comes from wanting to borrow, acquire, or use the strength of films, whether we are trying to lobby for a film budget or teaching a film. If we go out of our way in the interest of film, we have entered the great stock market of educational capitalism. It is important that we become aware of our own honest interests and the way those interests conflict with the interests of others (fellow teachers, administrators, and students) who would also, in some way or other and to various extents, like to possess film.

The administrative struggle for the allocation of institutional resources in terms of money, staff, and degrees depends upon the results of the power struggle among shareholders who debate pedagogy and vie for control of the study of film and ultimately of those resources.

The history of this debate is instructive and recapitulates many of the great issues in humanistic education over the last half century. Film study was born as an adjunct to the study of other disciplines when it was discovered that film swelled enrollments in English, Theater, Art, and Journalism and that it accorded a certain prestige to those teachers who knew how to harness its energy. In this paradigm, still active today, film is treated as a recent instance of a traditional source of values (mythic, aesthetic, sociological), and it is seen as the instance most capable in our era of relaying the innate power of that source to a large audience.

Film societies in the late fifties grew up to the side of these other disciplines in part to dispute this claim. Each week film societies proclaimed that film was valuable in itself and not because it camouflaged some older values traditionally studied in universities. For many students and facul-

ty these screenings set the emotional tone for the week and cued coffeehouse and classroom discussion in an informal manner.

Naturally it wasn't long before academics came along to capitalize on all this loose energy and began establishing film programs, majors, divisions, and departments. By and large they rested their claim on a knowledge of film history and a feeling for the importance of certain auteurs. In other words they achieved sovereignty by reason of a privileged set of films which defined the field and which they claimed knowledge of and a right to. Anyone teaching films outside that set clearly was teaching something other than film; and anyone using correct films but outside the program was doubtless misusing them (that is, teaching values irrelevant to film qua film).

This state couldn't last. Academic film tycoons who set the market value of every film by buying up auteurs cheaply (only to sell them later at great profit) were attacked because the nature of their work seemed improper in a university. Essentially collectors and buffs, their work is closer to connoisseurship than to scientific research.

The group planning the overthrow of the academic film tycoons may be called "the analysts." They offered methods by which to study any given film rather than a list of films to be studied. They realized that power in the university comes not from possessing objects of worth (rocks, flowers, films) but by way of a particular technique which transforms those objects into a certain kind of knowledge called geology, botany, or film analysis.

The technique which resulted from the effort of the analysts consists of factoring out from any film its specifically cinematic values and processes. The expert commands power by his ability to recognize such values. He rewards those students who differentiate films on the basis of the most number of differing traits (editing, angle, music, etc.) or who can pinpoint the key trait in a given film (the tracking shot in Max Ophuls). The teacher/analyst also wields power by deciding which films are likely to best illustrate the workings of "the cinematic." Indeed, a history of the cinema can be created by the expert as well as by the connoisseur, though it most probably would consist of a series of clips from films exemplifying the developing potential of the medium.

Structuralism, semiotics, and poststructuralism are the furthest developments of this tendency. In one sense, these movements amount to a counterrevolution, power having been lifted from those who professed a narrow technique (film analysis) and given to those whose techniques are valorized by the prestige they have in other disciplines (linguistics, marxism, psychoanalysis).

In surveying this great cycle of the development of film study we can see one constant. In each era and among each group there exists a privileged list (be it films, traits, methods) whose possession guarantees the group supremacy and for whose possession each group would readily ossify film study. The results of this parochialism have been film buffism among the auteurists and obscurantism among the analysts. In both cases, special knowledge protects the empowered class. And this is disappointing because we all thought at one time that film study could serve as the focus for a renovation of the liberal arts. Instead it has fallen prey to the specialization and professionalization which has made academic departments bastions of entrenched power and tradition, rather than fields of inquiry.

I would like to point out that this kind of power struggle has been fought innumerable times before. In the Middle Ages it was The Bible at the center of debate. When a class of hermeneutes was given authority over the interpretation of that text it meant uniformity and political power. A strict rule-bound game (consisting of interpretation at the four levels of literal, symbolic, analogic, and anagogic meaning) supressed all other games. The Church protected this uniformity by condemning all personal uses of the book as heretical and deserving of excommunication.

Today we have university provosts and deans conferring on groups of experts the rights of interpretation in film. While expertise certainly brings with it a measure of authority, I fear the repressive authority which departments have always claimed in order to protect the interests of that expertise.

While there is nothing which literally compels a film department or all of its members to adopt closed attitudes, I suspect there is a way of the academic world. After all, these same attitudes are exemplified in their own manner by all traditional disciplines. In struggling for autonomy and departmental status, film teachers are likely to take on these attitudes as means or ends, establishing a list of films which harbor obvious or astutely embedded cinematic treasures and insisting on the use of a special vocabulary for the study of these films. In this way they protect themselves in the name of "the field" or "professional film scholarship."

Chris Koch published an article a few years ago pointing out that universities have already implicitly decided what constitutes film study, and what constitutes success in the study of film.[2] Certain men have, out of thin air, been dubbed experts, and have been given power over film study: the power of rewarding and punishing students in organized programs, the power of granting degrees, and the greater power of determining who at the university can rightfully use film in teaching and research.

Koch outlines several rules by which a better player in the film talk game can outshine a worse player and can garner university rewards. A winning player can explain a large number of items within one film which differentiate it from another film, as when he can show the countless ways *La Terra Trema* differs from earlier non-Italian films and the fewer, but no less important ways it differs from main-line neorealist films with which most players usually associate it. Another rule states that a better player can see a vast network of significations stemming from a very few peculiar traits of a film, as when the significance of acting, narrative scheme, and world view are discovered to be embedded in the single trait of the tracking shot in a Max Ophuls film. A better player can differentiate himself from others by his ability to recognize good film talk from bad. Here he becomes the teacher and, while not playing the game himself, raises himself above others by categorizing their responses hierarchically. Koch doesn't say it, but this same teacher-player also is authorized to determine the terrain where the game will be played by choosing the films he already knows ought to reveal the most decisive differences to his best students. It is my belief that in film study a good player is also determined by his ability to explain a film by its differences from other films in what are specifically cinematic trait categories. The good player, in other words, not only knows the importance of a particular film, but he knows its cinematic importance and he is rewarded more than his colleague (and competitor) who explains other kinds of differences and other kinds of traits, or perhaps who deals with another kind of film.

I would then go further than Koch in listing rules, but I would agree with him that this overall system leads to rewarding students who do not think beyond, or change, the rules of the game. It encourages players to be hostile to those talking about film in other ways. It demands, in other words, a certain initiation into the game. It is my belief that this attitude is fostered and protected by the autonomous film program which formalizes rules and which thrives largely because of its guardianship of those rules. It has been authorized to develop "standards" and to rebuke any discussion of film which takes place outside of those standards, that is, which takes place elsewhere and by other rules.

Clearly it would be inhuman to suggest that film discussion should occur without standards and without the constant inspection of those standards. What is surprising and troublesome, however, is the desire students, faculty, and administrators have to codify those standards so soon and so thoroughly; to say that film study ought to go on in this building and that if it goes on in another it must do so without credit.

No doubt I show a certain cynicism or at least a pessimism in this dis-

trust of the departmental structure of our undergraduate educational process. Departments, it seems to me, are political and economic companies determined to grow to the largest possible size by means of all normal methods of advertising, competition, and self-interest. They demand production from their senior members in terms of publications and blind adherence from their graduate students. Recently they have begun insisting that majors remain more and more within the department to hold enrollments up. This has been facilitated by the diminution of liberal arts core and breadth requirements and the implicit encouragement at all levels of strong undergraduate specialization.

To reward the field of film by conferring on it departmental status ironically saps from it a native strength it possesses which otherwise could help implement radical changes in liberal education.

To me the greatest eras of film study have already passed us by. When Louis Delluc presided over the film club movement in Paris in the early twenties, scholars and afficiandos from all the arts gathered together and, on the basis of a naive interest in film, generated the excitement we call the impressionist movement. What went on then in terms of film discussion, film journals, and actual film making was to me education at its most real and important level. Then again in Paris, right after the second world war, Andre Bazin led a revival of this film club atmosphere, a revival of film journals, and a revival of independent filmmaking, all outside the university. Bazin was, in my estimation, the greatest film educator we have yet had, although he was barred forever from the university. Anything we can preserve of the natural interdisciplinary approach to film exemplified by these eras is worth the insecurity and chaos we may feel by operating in a nondepartmental manner.

Of course we don't live in such a vibrant, fluid, or generous milieu as those in Paris following both great wars. Students are looking for easy majors, professors for easy courses, or ones to make them popular. The nondepartmental system, it must be admitted, permits a degree of charlatanism which would appall those seriously interested in the development of both students and the field. Let me suggest, however, that on large campuses, at least, the natural economy of the educational process will eventually eradicate gross misuse of the medium. Those professors who teach film seriously and creatively will outlive those sycophants who cling pathetically to the field. Administrators and students will force the latter to return to their home areas and will encourage the former to more daring discoveries in film. Indeed, it has been my experience that many of the greatest sycophants sit solidly in departments of film from which they cannot be removed. They profess no other discipline and, no matter how inept, they

nonetheless teach film with the imprimatur of the film department. In the nondepartmental model, film teachers must convince their students, their peers, and their deans that they can profitably add to liberal education by offering a film course. The situation, I confess, might readily be different at the small college where the coefficient of competition is decisively lower.

But for campuses of all sizes I think the film center model is a substantial improvement over the film department model. Let me sketch some aspects of a film center. Depending on interest and funding there would be:

1. A clearinghouse of information concerning film courses being offered throughout the university, presided over by an advisor or advisors who would try to orchestrate the scheduling of these courses and who would advertise them. Clearly such an advisor would need to be well schooled in the medium and realize the impact on film of literature, psychology, linguistics, art history, etc.
2. A facility for film study equipped with projectors, viewers, purchased prints, frame enlargers, a film rental desk, and classrooms. If available, filmmaking equipment would be maintained at the center.
3. Courses in the theory and techniques of filmmaking and film analysis taught by the advisor(s) and their graduate students at the center. Presumably most graduate students would be involved in an intensive two year program (M.A.) or, in rare cases, would serve as long-term (four-year) research apprentices working with the center's advisors. Graduate education is another question entirely, but it would surely draw heavily on graduate seminars in related areas while it focused on film through seminars and individual projects at the center itself.
4. The film major. Obviously I am not in favor of a vast and carefully delineated major. The film center is designed to allow and encourage the interraction of professors and majors from various fields over a subject of common interest—film. But film could act as an appropriate major for some undergraduates who might use it to acquire the disciplines and investigate the problems which have always been at the heart of the ideology of liberal arts education. As Ortega once said, education's major goal in our century is to teach the need for education. Insofar as film encourages students to learn linguistics, French, psychology, art history, and so on rather than multiplying courses on genres and auteurs, it could serve this goal perhaps better than any major in the university.

Guidelines for minimum and maximum amounts of film courses, requisite outside study, specification of film areas to be covered (production,

history, analysis, sociology, etc.) could all be worked out without the film advisor dictating the precise content of the major. This kind of work has already been done at Illinois, which does not have a traditional film division or department. At Iowa, which does have such a division, we have tried to create the impact of a center by reducing departmental requirements, encouraging and crosslisting appropriate film offerings from other departments, and demanding that our majors branch out into other departments.

It seems to me that this kind of attitude is the only justification for a film major. Admittedly all of this does not completely rid us of the spectre of the expert (for what else are advisors and graduate students?), but it does acknowledge film to be a trigger for discovery and not a product to be consumed. At its best, film spurs students to confront other disciplines, other students, other methods, other arts, and even other films than the ones currently hypostasized in the film departments some of us are struggling to create or protect.

To me, films are both cultural objects to be mastered and experiences which continually master us. The film buff is a mere collector of experiences (his own or those of the auteurs he worships) and the film scientist protects himself from experience by a certain technique of mastery. Education, I believe, is best served by a dialectic which forces us to interrogate films and then to interrogate ourselves in front of films. We must learn to experience, to remove ourselves from experience, to understand experience, and then to reexperience in what amounts to a perpetual internal revolution. The temptation to halt this flight of education, a temptation which is at once psychological and political, is the desire to fixate, possess, and fetishize some aspect of a process whose value derives precisely from this flight. Film departments block out the field and position the "I" before it. Every true film education, in search of the field and in search of the "I" must strive to overturn the security of this situation.

Dudley Andrew is an Associate Professor and Head of the Film Division at the University of Iowa.

Notes

1. This article is a revised form of an address given at The New England Conference on Film Education, April 26, 1975, in Amherst, Massachusetts, sponsored by the Northeast University Film Study Center.

2. Christian Koch, "Cinema, Discours, Evenement," trans. Mikel Dufrenne, *Revue d'esthetique*, 2,3,4 (1973), pp. 173-180.

ESTABLISHING A DISCIPLINE FOR THE TEACHING OF FILM: CRITICISM AND THE LITERARY ANALOGUE

Marsha Kinder

At the March Conference on the Teaching of Film, the following questions were raised: Should we establish independent departments of film or cooperative interdisciplinary centers? Should we exclude literary critics as amateurs, or welcome them humanistically in our common drive toward a broad liberal arts education? Should we teach filmmaking as an artistic medium for personal expression or as a perceptual instrument for exploring the environment? Should we focus on the phenomenology of the filmviewing experience or invent new technology for the objective analysis of the celluloid filmstrip? Should we produce unique artists or interchangeable technicians, responsive critics or responsible teachers, sensitive film buffs or sensible cinesemiologists? The central issue emerging from the conference was: how do we define our discipline? The solutions moved in two directions—inward and outward.

Like many others, my impulse was to look for an answer within my own context—Occidental College, a small liberal arts college situated in Los Angeles, with minimal equipment and no cinema major or center. What we do have is a number of bright students interested in film, a flexible curriculum stressing interdisciplinary courses and independent study, one filmmaker (Chick Strand), and one critic (myself). Within this loose framework, Chick Strand and I have complete freedom to define the discipline as we see it. From my perspective, at the center is the critical process. Whether applied by critic or artist, it can function as an exploratory tool that simultaneously probes the self, the outside world, and their interaction. Like any language or methodology, it can shape perception and define what it examines. The subjective consciousness of the critic/artist transforms and is transformed by the object under scrutiny; the world resulting from this collabo-

ration is liberating to both for it expands their respective possibilities. In dealing with a specific work of art, the critic can use a comparative method to define the particular combination of the unique and conventional elements, to understand the work's multiple functions for the individual and society, to evaluate how the artist has transformed the medium in order to express a particular vision. The deeper one moves into the individual work and the particular response to it, the more likely one is to break through to the general nature of the medium and the phenomenology of the filmviewing process. This critical process is valuable, not only with respect to film and other media, but also with people and human events. In its broadest sense, criticism is an attitude toward experience.

This critical approach to film study can be used in any context—department or interdisciplinary center, filmmaking or history and aesthetics, independent cinema or documentary, "pure" cinema or literary adaptation. Although I began as a critic of eighteenth century English literature, then moved to film, and am now developing a new area of dream criticism, I find that I always have been essentially doing the same things and dealing with the same issues. My object of scrutiny shifts, but the critical process remains constant. Thus, at Occidental, I have tried to introduce film into as many different contexts as possible: in literature courses on the eighteenth century, I compare Swift with Buñuel, Gay with Brecht and Godard, the *Dunciad* with *Dr. Strangelove*, *Clarissa* with *The Story of Adele H* and *Scenes from a Marriage*, and treat my own screenplay of *Tristram Shandy* (written in collaboration with Beverle Houston); in Literary Criticism, I include cinesemiology and use selected films for application of a variety of approaches; in Dream Styles, I do a comparative analysis of the two media and contrast the dream adaptations of Bergman, Fellini, and Buñuel; in the Archetypal Trip, I move from Homer's *Odyssey* to Castaneda's *Tales of Power* with digressions to Buñuel's *Discreet Charm* and *Phantom of Liberty*. Frequently I am invited to give guest lectures on film in courses taught by others, particularly when they have an interdisciplinary emphasis: "Cellini and Fellini—the Artist as Narcissist," in an experimental freshman honors program; "Zardoz Crystallized," in a course on Images and Ideas; "Madwomen in the Movies," in a Women's Studies course in Sociology; "A Structuralist Approach to 2001," in a course on Literature and Science. I introduce film courses into whatever departments will accept them: "Film Aesthetics," in the Department of Speech and Drama; "Orson Welles and the American Dream," and "Sex Roles in Literature, Film, and Society," in American Studies; "Films and Screenplays of Ingmar Bergman," and "Literary/Film Analogies," in English and Comparative Literature.

For practical consideration, I want to describe some specific ways in which film can be studied within a literary context without sacrificing the integrity of the cinematic medium, while going beyond the conventional literary adaptation classes. Any such course would have to meet three basic criteria: to respect the autonomy of both media, their differences and unique potential; to apply the comparative method so that it enhances our understanding of both media; and to justify its inclusion within a literary department without distortion.

An Extended Comparison of a Filmmaker and a Writer

Jonathan Swift and Luis Buñuel furnish ample material for an in-depth comparison. Both masterful satirists with similar views of experience, they make a series of analogous choices in style. In *Land Without Bread* and *A Modest Proposal*, they parody genres (the rational treatise and the ethnographic film) that pretend to be objective and logical in exploring the relationship between reason and humanism. They both use ironic narration to explore two contrasting cultures and deliver a double-edged satirical attack. The unselfconscious visual style of *Exterminating Angel* serves a parallel function as the plain prose style of *Gulliver's Travels*; it achieves verisimilitude for a fantastic tale, and creates a surface normality that heightens the power of the underlying nightmare situation and the bitter attitude toward experience. These works parody the disaster film and travel literature respectively, mocking the pride of individual heroism and the distortion of cultural formulae that supposedly guarantee progress and survival. Both contain an ironic use of repetition, stressing that we are trapped within limited alternatives. A complex network of digressions operates in *Tale of a Tub* and *Phantom of Liberty*. Both works dramatize the narrative structure by explicitly commenting on the disruptions, but with opposing implications. Swift uses digressions to satirize modern writers and to reaffirm the value of common forms, while Buñuel exposes the confining nature of conventions and pursues the phantom of liberty. In this way, Buñuel is more like Laurence Sterne, who adapted Swift's techniques in his novel *Tristram Shandy* in order to celebrate the anarchistic nature of experience. Throughout their canons, Swift and Buñuel use digestive and scatalogical imagery as a means of emphasizing our animal nature and our pathetic attempts to disguise it. Animal images recur in the works of both artists. The primary value in their satire lies not in a program for reforming human society, but in honestly facing human nature; they force us to see

that we are creatures of limited potential, always affected by our animal nature.

A Comparison Between a Genre in Literature and Film

The soap opera and the sentimental novel are genres that appeal predominantly to a female audience and have a potential for revolutionary development. Both present a world in which the capacity for feeling is at the top of the moral hierarchy—a value which our sexist culture has traditionally associated with women. On a structural level, both are open-ended, slow-paced, multiclimaxed forms that may be more in tune with female sexual rhythms, particularly in comparison with the "well-made" play with its big bang denouement. Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, and Ingmar Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage*, both celebrate feminine consciousness and growth and do so partly by transforming these popular genres into "high art." *Clarissa* presents a passionate struggle between two powerful individuals—a man and a woman—who respectively hold a comic and a tragic world view. Their clash is dramatized stylistically in a conflict between two literary forms—the action-oriented drama used by the man, and the introspective personal letter developed by the woman. *Scenes from a Marriage* presents a couple over a ten-year period as they move from a model marriage, through a painful divorce, to a loving extramarital affair. In the process, both change and gain more self insight. But while the wife grows by getting in touch with her strength that has been restricted by the culture, the husband gets in touch with his limitations. Bergman's treatment of the soap opera, which he raises to serious high art, parallels the positive growth of the woman.

Writers Influenced by Film

Alain Robbe-Grillet and William Burroughs are both concerned with the frozen quality of language in contrast with the fluidity of filmic images, but they deal with the polarity quite differently. In his novels and screenplay (*The Last Words of Dutch Schultz*), Burroughs achieves fluidity at every structural level—the sentence, the paragraph, the chapter, the novel, characterization, point of view, time, space; he celebrates the protoplasmic ooze, which even spills over from one medium to another. In contrast, Robbe-Grillet captures the frozen quality of language on film in *Last Year*

at Marienbad, which he has described as a documentary about statues. Characters, dialogue, settings, sequences are all locked into repetitive static patterns that create the labyrinthine structure of the film.

This comparison raises a broader question of how phenomenology, as a mode of criticism, enables us to deal with the relationship between literature and film. Buñuel, Godard, and Makavejev form a tradition of unconventional filmmakers who treat language in film as Freud suggested it was used in dreams. Words are not transparent signs referring to the external world, nor do they express abstract ideas; rather, they are transformed into concrete percepts shaped by the particular context in which they are seen or heard. Hence, despite the political orientation of their work, a phenomenological approach is frequently more fruitful than an ideological analysis in dealing with the films of these directors. Having long dissolved the line between critic and artist, Godard is extremely enlightening about the relationship between language and visual media in his latest film, *Numero Deux*. In this propagandistic pornie, he analyses how our attitudes toward sex and politics are shaped by the mass media (television and cinema) and by our language (the printed word expressed through moving concrete poetry, and the spoken word expressed through lecture and dialogue), all of which are rooted in binary thinking. We observe three generations within a family unit employing verbal and visual language, influenced by four media, to cope with the bipolarities of male/female, left/right, self/other, inner/outer realities. Any idea expressed in the film, even if directly by Godard, himself, must be interpreted in the context of the mode, medium, and environment in which it is presented.

Films that Rely Heavily on Literary Allusions

Performance, *El Topo*, *Zardoz*, and *2001* are highly experimental in visual style and narrative structure, yet they rely heavily on literary and cinematic allusions to place themselves within a firmly established artistic tradition. Perhaps they form a new genre. All four move forward and backward in time; they reject the conventional diachronic plot and create instead a synchronic musical structure. In all four films, the structure is transformational. They start out parodying a genre and presenting a mock quest, which then grows into a serious philosophical exploration. They begin as one kind of film and end up as another. The transformational structure can be traced back to *Don Quixote*, which contains the roots of the novel as a mixed form. All four films are concerned with expanded consciousness.

Breaking the ego barrier is translated into breaking the genre or medium barrier in order to explore the relationship between the one and the many.

A Comparison Between Literary and Film Criticism

In a sense, all film criticism implies a comparison between the cinematic and verbal media. Both in writing and in oral discussion, language is the critical medium. If you examine the language of any film critic, you find insights into his or her approach and assumptions. Of course, this is true of criticism in all the arts, yet in literature the medium is the same both for the artist and the critic. In order to demonstrate the special qualities of a passage, the critic can merely quote it. But this is not possible for the film critic unless the sequence in question can be projected on a screen. The cinematic experience can never be totally captured in verbal language, but its approximation presents quite a challenge. The film critic is put in a position similar to that of a novelist, who must stretch the language in order to describe a multisensory experience. Yet, very few critics rise to the challenge. The witty, articulate Pauline Kael uses her verbal power to express moral indignation, while Andrew Sarris usually wields his to reinforce a polemical stance. Marxists employ language to delineate their theoretical position, whereas cinesemiologists work toward an exhaustive process of discrimination and classification that frequently moves the reader very far away from the filmviewing experience. As might be expected, it is the phenomenological critics like Raymond Durgnat, Susan Sontag, Penelope Gilliatt, and novelists like Graham Greene and James Agee, who develop a language that attempts to capture the texture of what we experience while actually watching a film.

Any of these topics that I have sketched so briefly, could be the subject for a series of lectures or an entire course. From this list of examples, it may be apparent that my notion of a film discipline is open ended. I am suggesting it have at its center a criticism that relates the self to the external world and that is willing to incorporate any information or method which proves illuminating.

Marsha Kinder is an Associate Professor of Literature and Film at Occidental College.

THE "PLUS"
A Presentation on the Integration of Theory and Practice in the Teaching of Film.

Donald Skoller

Essentially, this is a report on a pilot program integrating theory and practice in the study of film. The aims of the program grew out of teaching experiences in well-supported film departments where increasing dissatisfaction with activities and results—on the part of both students and faculty—seemed traceable to lack of meaningful interaction between their "Critical Studies" and "Production" sections. This separatism was sustained by the frequently stated attitude that interaction between theory and practice was something that happened on its own within the student. Suggestion that *the action of integration*, itself, might be given form and exercise in a department's approach to film education didn't seem to register. When things got worse in one of these departments, interaction finally was considered seriously, as this 1973 letter from an instructor shows:

> The students in film theory have increasingly felt it necessary to try out some of their ideas (because) it is clear that at some point one must cease merely talking about film and begin to see if theory can be translated into practice. Concurrently, the production faculty. . . who used to be most reactionary with regard to Critical Studies are *urging* that Critical Studies students and faculty bring their knowledge and orientation to bear on the problems of film production within the program.

It didn't seem to work out. In February, 1976, the same instructor writes:

> I no longer have a "we against them" feeling about Critical Studies and Production, although the animosities between [us] continue to a degree. A large degree, in

> fact. But since the faculty hardly ever meets as a body anymore, thanks to [the chairman's] restructuring of the department, it seldom comes to the surface.

At least some problems were solvable! But the letter has an "Alphaville" feeling to it. It communicates a sense of deepening isolation. One listens more closely to Godard's oracle, which seems a direct comment on the department's dilemma, particularly at the moment when they seemed to be trying to integrate theory and practice. Here, through "Alpha 60," are Godard's thoughts:

> One isolated word or an isolated detail in a drawing can be understood. But the comprehension of the whole escapes us. Once we know the number 1, we believe we know the number 2, because 1 plus 1 makes 2. But we have forgotten that firstly we have to know the meaning of "plus."

The *Plus*—quite explicitly—is *the action of integration*. And there is little evidence that it does "happen on its own," as members of these departments believed. On the contrary, the evidence points to it having to be worked at. To talk about Film Education is really to talk about two mediums—film *and* education. In the school cited earlier, the medium—separatistic with regard to theory and practice—was, indeed, the message and what happened *on its own*—even when people finally tried to prevent it—was the split becoming institutionalized within the faculty and students themselves.

I think this split between theory and practice has determined a number of other things characteristic of film education today. As an approach, it is geared to the student who has early facility, who can make a film that is interesting or ingratiating almost right from the start. As an indication of effectiveness, these film departments point with pride to the occasional Coppola or Scorsese who emerges. But the Coppolas and Scorseses invariably cite availability of equipment rather than exercise of an educational approach as the main thing derived from film school. And it's true. The unintegrated approach hasn't developed techniques that might *educe* latent or potential abilities from students who come to school in need of more than the equipment these departments provide. Mightn't we, then, while still maintaining our equipment-dispensing function, also start developing more formal approaches to the teaching of film? With these things in mind:

> the pilot program I report on had three fundamental aims:
> 1) To exercise and give form to the action of integration itself.

2) To cultivate an articulated sense of the basic elements of the film medium, a "practical aesthetics."
3) To engender in film students a capacity for the natural alternation or combination of formal and intuitional approaches to their work.

The realization of these aims is approached through a three-phase sequence of study that moves from *Basic Elements*, to *Synthesis*, and then to *Fluency*. Central to all of this is *the action of integration*. The rest follows all-of-a-piece because when we speak of the action of integration, the *Plus*, we're speaking about a *kind of energy* that is being generated and that determines the character of the program. In the school described in the letters above, a separatistic structure appears to have generated a centrifugal force that tended to spin things away from each other. This spin-out has kept filmmaking students from becoming properly informed. By providing a fundamental action of integration between technical and aesthetic functions, the pilot program attempts to reverse this. In unintegrated procedures, the student is given standard instructions in basic technical matters—f/stop, distance setting, light readings, etc. This amounts to showing the student how to place his or her fingers on the keys to hit the right note. But it does little toward cultivating an informed sense of the basic potential of each cinematic function to generate or contribute toward a variety of cinematic effects. To involve students in exercises or *etudes* exploring these elements and relationships would be to help them to learn the scales, chords, and harmonies of their medium. But currently, an instant sense of fluency is cultivated. Students are asked to "make films"—in much the same way they are invited to play pop tunes in first lessons provided by certain musical-instrument stores. This might be called the "Gee, Dad, it's a Wurlitzer!" approach to film education. In its three-phase sequence, the pilot program takes a number of these things into account and makes them an integral part of the following aims:

Phase One: Basic Elements

Familiarization with the cinema process through screenings, readings, and discussion of individual contributions of writer, director, actor, camera and sound people etc. Establishment of a basic vocabulary. *Laissez-faire* exercises of students' own designs growing out of the theoretical concerns of the course. This is the equivalent of a first-semester course.

Concentration on and articulation of basic properties and dynamics of the film medium. Film-piece exercises or *etudes* embodying discrete elements

of theory derived from screenings, readings, and discussions. This is the equivalent of a second-semester course and it will be the course presented in detail, below.

Phase Two: Synthesis

Close study of interactions between the discrete elements treated individually in the first phase, second part, above. The approach is through study of individual filmmakers, analysis, and then practical emulation of their ways with film. The first semester focuses on three filmmakers—"popular," "serious," and "underground" (e.g., Hawks/Bresson/Snow, or Leone/Dreyer/Brakhage, etc.), whose "styles" are analyzed formally. These analyses then become a basis for emulative film-pieces through which the student puts theory into practice. In the second semester of this phase, the student may concentrate on a completely independent work, or his own work as the material under study and go on to emulate this in the "improve upon, out-do past performance" sense of the term.

Phase Three: Fluency

Proceeding from and in the service of reinforcing assimilation of information and technique derived from the two preceding phases. Might be characterized as the phase of "Informed Intuitional Filmmaking." Now the departmental resources and freedom-to-do-one's-own-thing spirit are opened up to the student in support of his or her project. In a sense, scales and chords have moved toward becoming a part of the filmmaker and he is invited to improvise and compose from within an informed self. Or: serves and ground-strokes coming more naturally (the result of hours of practice?), he or she is invited "into competition."

Appended to this report is the 'Weekly Lecture Focus" section of the syllabus for the course offered in the second half of the "Basic Elements" year. The syllabus also contained a calendar sheet with reading and screening assignments and a filmmaking assignment sheet which described the exercises or *etudes*. That sheet also gave deadlines for mailing films for processing, so they'd be back in time to use when needed. On the "Weekly Focus" sheets, the student films related directly to the topics described for the weeks they were scheduled.

In the Fall of 1973, at CCNY, this course was offered to about 75

students—two sections of 30, from the college at large, and one section of 15 special film-program students. The school had about 15 Kodak Instamatics, 10 Capro, 3 Bolex, 3 Canon, and 3 Fujica Super-8 cameras. Provision had also been made to give each student 3 rolls of super-8 (50') film and processing.

Each student was expected to choose two of the seven exercises described on their assignment sheet. These were discussed in class during the first two weeks and assignments were made to give balanced coverage to each exercise. I found that the biggest problems were logistical: getting film back on time from processing and checking equipment in and out so everyone would have a shot at what they needed. Interestingly enough, the nature of the material, the level of discourse was not a problem. Students seemed stimulated—turned on—by engagement of essential cinematic issues. This impression was confirmed by outside observation of the course in reports by colleagues which noted in one observation during the ninth week: "The students volunteered freely. Their comments were not glib. I was impressed by their thoughtfulness and what appeared to be sincere effort to really understand what they had viewed as it related to the theoretical work they were dealing with. The students followed each other's observations and perceptions with real interest and respect. The general tone was one of beginners who had quite remarkably already achieved a kind of professional rapport."

I think a lot of what the observer described came from the kind of experience the students had been having in the course during the preceding eight weeks. The course had been conceived specifically as an introductory over-view of film theory. Each element was mutually reinforcing—readings, discussion, film viewing, and film making. It was acknowledged from the start that many of the issues of the course would be difficult or elusive. The students seemed to accept this challenge and only occasionally express anxiety about "not getting something." My response here was that I'd rather have them "get" a good-sized fraction of what I believed was a real vision and sounding of the nature of film than 100 percent of something that was tokenistic; that I would rather have them derive the beginnings of a true sense of cinema, than fully encompass something less.

The students had been involved in making and critiquing films of their own or their classmates This gave a special individuation to each of them two or three times a semester. Also, this unitary rhythm of viewing individual films concerned with discrete points of theory sharpened the focus of what was a rather large class for filmmaking.

I find the observer's mention of "professional rapport" among these

beginners especially interesting. I think it came from their sense of being what they were supposed to be: students and beginners. The exercise or *etude* (which is perhaps best defined as a successful or more aesthetically pleasing "exercise") takes the false pressure of having to make a "professionally" presentable film off the students. In most other film schools I've been involved with, the student is somehow made to feel that the purpose of the film, even at this stage of things, is primarily presentational. These films were defined as exercises and fulfilled their purposes as such by opening the student to observation of technical and conceptual flaws without the defensiveness or humiliation that occurs in more competitive situations. The latter, at its extreme, leads students to hire other people or special corner-cutting equipment to get the results that will either ingratiate them with their instructors or allow them to survive some process of elimination.

The year following first offering of this course, I requested two improvements: 1) regularization of check-in and check-out of equipment procedures that would accommodate the needs of students to a greater degree than the less formal methods used at first. 2) Establishent of 1-credit and 2-credit "Tech Lab" sections as regularly scheduled module sections to assist students with basic technical problems they were having and which required more attention than the less formal procedures of the first year allowed. These requests were carried out for the first semester of the following year and improved the "quality of life" for these courses. However, these deteriorated drastically over the next 10 months due to large scale theft of equipment and pyramiding withdrawal of funds as the New York City financial crisis tightened.

Donald Skoller is a Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Film, School of Fine Arts, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND FILM
The Social Science Implications of Regarding Film as Communication

Jay Ruby

Film study and instruction in production has, by and large, been concentrated in the arts and humanities in most American universities. This is a logical place for such training if one assumes that film is exclusively an art form. Viewed from this perspective, social scientists are only able to deal with film as one manifestation of the aesthetic output of a culture, that is, with the study of art.

If, however, one regards film as Worth (1966) and others have suggested, as a technology and medium of communication which contains articulated sign-events constructed and organized by makers, or in the words of my own discipline, anthropology, as a culturally specific symbol system which can be employed in a variety of ways to make statements about the world. Some of these statements are intended to be interpreted as art, some are not.

Once film is placed in this communication framework (which includes film as art) other perspectives are revealed which suggest that film can be utilized in three ways within the social sciences: film can be studied as a datum of behavior, that is, for what it reveals about the sociology, psychology, and anthropology of the makers; film can be used as a technological device to generate data on human behavior which can be subjected to a variety of scientific analyses; and film can be utilized as a medium for the presentation of social science research findings and theoretical statements.

The Translation of the Idea into a Curriculum

For a number of historical reasons, anthropology is probably in the best position to translate the above assumptions into a curriculum (cf.

DeBrigard 1971 for a history of anthropology and film). While it is not possible to discuss all of the factors, it should be pointed out that anthropologists have been using the motion picture camera ever since 1896 (Regnault 1896). Since that time, it has become commonplace for anthropologists to take pictures—both moving and still—as part of their field work and even more common for anthropologists to use films in their teaching. Therefore, a visual anthropology is in a more developed stage when compared to similar movements in sociology or psychology.

Out of this tradition within anthropology, a particular curriculum has been developed at Temple University in Philadelphia. The teaching of visual anthropology at Temple has two larger contexts which, to some degree, define and give a specific focus to the training. The first is a departmental philosophy of graduate education, and the second is the fact that this training occurs within a program of graduate studies in culture and communication.

Graduate education in anthropology at Temple is based on the traditional assumption that anthropologists should have a foundation in all areas of their discipline—linguistics, archaelogy, and cultural and physical anthropology. Only after successful completion of general comprehensive exams are students encouraged to specialize. Students with an interest in film pursue their speciality within the broader context of the culture and communication program.

The program is designed to train students of anthropology who wish to study various modes of communication in a cultural context. The basic assumption underlying the program is that all communicative, interactive, and expressive forms of behavior are legitimate subjects of anthropological inquiry.

The approach to culture and communication proceeds from a particular view of both culture and communication. Culture is seen as a symbolic system which is generated by a set of rules shared by members of a society. These symbols are socially defined and hence, communicative in nature and function. Furthermore, the symbols can only be analyzed when both their underlying (generating) rules *and* their social contexts are considered.

Since communication is viewed as the use of codes (i.e., culturally defined patterns of symbolic behavior) in a social context, the analysis of communication systems and events suggests itself as a logical approach to explicating both the underlying rules of culture and the social contexts of symbolic behavior.

It should be emphasized that our commitment to the study of the ways people communicate in living situations and our interest in developing communication models for anthropological studies involves us in two separate,

though related, enterprises. The first leads us to examine all the various modes of communication within single cultures and across cultures, and requires us to understand verbal and visual communication in social contexts. The second leads us to see cultural systems as sets of rules that permit the exchange of symbols. Substantively, the first enterprise leads us to study areas such as linguistics, vidistics, dance and ritual, while the second requires that we think of all culture as some kind of integrated set of circuits for the exchange of messages.

In dealing with the concerns outlined above, and making use of the resources available in our department, several major foci have evolved in the culture and communication program. They are:

1. The construction of models based on the analogy between cultural and communication systems, so that one can examine communication systems as culture and cultural systems as communication.
2. The consideration of methodological problems involved in the construction of these models.
3. The understanding of the nature, functions, and contexts of language as well as the adaptation and application of linguistic analysis (particularly sociolinguistics) to other modes of communication.
4. The study of religion and ritual is considered relevant to students of culture and communication, since both are analyzed as sets of rules for the exchanges of messages, as well as sets of messages worthy of study in and of themselves.
5. The exploration of non-verbal forms of communication, especially visual media.

The remainder of the paper will discuss the teaching of visual anthropology within this program. Visual anthropology should be conceptualized broadly enough to include: the study of human non-linguistic forms of communication which typically involves some visual technology for data collecting and analysis; the study of visual products, such as films, as communicative activity and as a datum of culture amenable to ethnographic analysis; and the use of visual media for the presentation of data and research findings—data and findings that otherwise remain verbally unrealized.

It should be understood that all areas of visual anthropology do not necessarily require the use of visual technology. However, most analyses are seriously handicapped without some mechanical means of replay for slow motion and repeated viewings. Hence, data are typically gathered with the aid of some visual mechanical device, such as a camera.

While recognizing the importance of technology for visual anthropology, the acquisition of competence in film production is regarded as a technical skill which some students may need to acquire in order to pursue their research and teaching goals. As a technical skill, film production is viewed like other skills, such as statistics or contour map-making—they are simply tools which have potential utility, provided a research design calls for them. It is realized that a basic understanding of film theory, construction, and filmic conventions is necessary for an understanding of film as a communicative medium. The film medium is thought of in terms of its limitations, advantages, function, what it can and cannot be expected to accomplish, and where the use of film is an indispensable aid to specific research interests. The general question that must be repeatedly asked is, what have you gained after using a visual medium that you would not have gained without it?

Significant scientific research problems for an anthropologist do not consist of how to get a better sound track, why a particular tripod does not swivel in the Arctic, or what is the best distribution company for a film. These technical questions become relevant after research has been designed which demands a methodological approach involving visual technology.

Some problems in visual anthropology that are intimately tied to the use of film include:

1. Microanalytic studies of human interpersonal behaviors, such as kinesics, proxemics, and tacesics, are generally aided by some form of visual evidence. In some courses, students have examined behavioral events such as greeting, interviewing, teaching, eating, and panhandling. In these cases, the camera and repeated projections act as extensions of the researcher's perceptual ability.
2. Visual technology may also be used in the study of macrounits of human behavior. Reference here is made to the production of motion picture footage of particular rituals, ceremonies, technological and/or artistic processes, socialization practices, subsistence patterns, warfare, etc. In this context, any visual manifestation of a culture is relevant subject matter.
3. In addition, the visual products of both professional and nonprofessional camera use can be studied as cultural artifacts. Images here are treated as data of a particular culture. This interest becomes more important to anthropology as an increased number of societies begin to produce their own sets of mass-mediated messages (Ruby 1973, Worth 1972). Research interests may necessitate the use of content analysis for the study of themes, plots, or the construction of realities in media drama—work

that was originally stimulated by Mead and Metraux's *The Study of Culture at a Distance* (1953). As more societies begin using the technology of mass media, the entire process of visual communication may be studied as a culturally structured stream of expressive and symbolic activity. This emphasis must include behavioral observations of the process, the artifacts per se, and the audiences for specific productions. This perspective may apply to the creation and reception of a photograph, a film, or a television program, as well as to the creation of an art object, or the study of dance and other folkloric performances.

4. A final problem is the dissemination of research findings, that is, in developing the most effective strategy for using film or other visual forms to present anthropological statements. This problem encompasses not only the types of research mentioned above, but potentially all phases of anthropological inquiry. Here, students explore film as a communication system in order to discover whether a set of filmic conventions can be developed which are somehow uniquely suited for the display of anthropological concepts (Ruby 1975).

Utilizing this theoretical framework, a particular curriculum has evolved. Students interested in visual anthropology may enter the program at three different levels—as a beginning undergraduate, as an undergraduate major, and as a graduate student. For beginning undergraduates, we offer a course titled, "The Human Image: A Communications Approach to Culture." The course attempts to introduce the major concepts of cultural anthropology by examining one particular culture through different communicative forms. Students examine written ethnographies, novels, journals, ethnographic and documentary films, Hollywood-produced fictional films, sculpture, printmaking and music. Emphasis is placed on understanding culture as communication and how the image of one culture, and the human condition in general, may be variably represented and partially determined by different modes of communication. Students examine their own culture using various verbal and visual modes so that they will gain a personal understanding of culture and communication.

For undergraduate majors in anthropology, a semester course is offered entitled, "An Introduction to Culture and Communication." Here we compare systems and patterns of communicative behavior across codes, across behavioral settings, and across cultures, and expose students to communication models from linguistics, social psychology, semiotics, information theory, cybernetics, etc. A similar introductory graduate seminar is available. This course covers essentially the same material as the undergraduate course but in greater depth and intensity.

The second group of courses were designed as seminars for undergraduate seniors and beginning graduate students. They concentrate on a particular communicative mode. These offerings draw upon a general framework presented in the introductory courses and offer examinations in specific areas. For instance, courses in visual anthropology are offered which concentrate on such topics as anthropological film, vidistics, and specific codes of non-verbal communication.

The non-verbal courses are presented in the context of interactional and communicational anthropology, and examine visual perception, ethnology, body movement, the symbolic uses of space from microlevels of dyadic interaction to architecture, design, and the planning of cities and whole cultures.

In the vidistics course, students explore culturally structured patterns of encoding and decoding behavior and associated visual products that are necessarily involved in the process of visual communication. Here, students are introduced to such research as Worth and Adair's Navaho project (1972), comparisons of films made by both anthropologists and the people they study, films made by subcultures all living within the same urban setting (Chalfen 1972), and the ethnographic study of communities of moviemakers such as Hollywood and homemovie productions (Chalfen 1975). Training in the production of visual materials is indispensible to any student of a culture's visual products. The context and meaning of such products cannot be properly considered without an understanding of the contextual scheme of production that necessarily surrounds that product.

The anthropological film course deals with a history of documentary and anthropological film styles, film theory, and aesthetics, and offers an introduction to the problems of production. The course emphasizes the development of a scientific approach to filmmaking, and of the construction of filmic conventions useful to a visual anthropologist. A similar course is taught in anthropological photography.

The third category of courses emphasizes the development of appropriate methodologies for research and fieldwork in visual anthropology. For instance, one course titled, "Methods in the Ethnography of Communication," starts with work in sociolinguistics and explores parallel directions in non-verbal codes. In another methods course, we survey a broad array of relevant literature in such areas as cultural anthropology, folklore, sociology, research photography, content analysis, social psychology, etc., to find appropriate strategies for anthropologically oriented research in cross-cultural visual communication, photojournalism, anthropological film, the home mode of visual communication, and biodocumentary filmmaking—just to mention a few research interests that have been examined

The fourth category consists of advanced graduate seminars—designed

primarily for doctoral students. These seminars are structured around a specific research problem such as, "The Use of Content Analysis in the Cultural Analysis of Visual Form," or "The Examination of Open Spaces as Symbols of a Community," or "Advanced Problems in Vidistic Research," to name a few.

This program has evolved over the past seven years from one faculty member teaching one seminar in visual anthropology, to five faculty members teaching twenty-five courses in culture and communication, ten of which are directly concerned with visual anthropology.

In 1973, the Anthropology Department moved into a new building which provides teaching and research labs. These facilities are equipped with darkrooms, screening facilities, and an array of still, 16mm, Super-8mm, and VTR equipment for production and analysis uses. It is nice to have these facilities and equipment. However, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that this program was developed without all of the elaborate and expensive technology only recently acquired. There is a feeling that any work in visual anthropology will be financially handicapped, and that the cost for equipment and facilities has held up the development of the field in general. In some ways, this is similar to saying that you cannot become a cultural anthropologist because you can't afford an electric typewriter. Film study and some rudimentary film production instruction can be accomplished with a very small budget. For the first six years, this program spent less than $1000 on equipment.

At the present time, there is a lack of formal graduate training within institutions granting degrees in what might be called social science filmmaking, that is, the use of the motion picture as a device to communicate social science concepts. Students interested in becoming technically competent in motion picture production must seek that training in film schools and, on an ad hoc basis, learn the theories and methods of social science. Lacking a structured program, and a faculty both supportive and competent in the study and use of film in social sciences, most students end up selecting one area to the exclusion of the other, that is, they decide to *either* be trained as a filmmaker, *or* as a social scientist, but seldom become equally competent. The lack of opportunity to combine both interests has resulted in the development of a group of filmmakers and social scientists who are interested in making social science films but who lack sufficient sophistication in each other's fields to make a successful collaboration possible. During most of these collaborative productions within the field of anthropology, the filmmakers have retreated into their documentary film conventions and become overly concerned with pro-

ducing a salable "good" film. The social scientists, on the other hand, have covered the images with a barrage of words—in the narration and with the accompanying written materials—in the hopes that somehow the images will become magically transformed into scientific statements if they say the right words.

As a beginning step to open the doors to a more sophisticated use of the motion picture as a legitimate scientific communicative device for anthropology and other social sciences, a specialization in visual anthropology within the currently existing Masters of Arts program in Anthropology is offered.

The goal of this program is twofold: to train filmmakers in both film production and anthropology so that they might be able to more effectively collaborate with anthropologists; and to provide anthropologists with sufficient film training so that they might be able to either collaborate with a filmmaker or produce their own films. For the former student, the Master's degree would be terminal. For the latter student, the degree could be a partial preparation for the Doctoral program.

The program will provide all students with:

1. A sufficiently sophisticated knowledge of anthropology to enable them to work collaboratively with anthropologists and other social scientists on research projects which require data to be generated with image and sound producing technologies, and on the production of ethnographic films; and
2. Training in technical skills, aesthetic, theoretical, and methodological knowledge required of filmmakers concerned with the scientific/humanistic use of image and sound producing technologies.

The program consists of a year's residence at Temple, where students are taught the fundamentals of general anthropology, culture and communication, and visual anthropology; and a second year of study at the Anthropology Film Center in Santa Fe under the direction of Carroll and Joan Williams. During this year, students learn the techniques of film production as they relate to the theories and methodologies of social science filming.

Conclusions

There are some obvious consequences of this program. Being within a department of anthropology, the primary concern is to develop a rigorously

anthropological approach to the study of visual communication and to integrate that scholarly interest with the professional need to train people in the theories, methodologies, and techniques of social science filmmaking.

Within the academic program, the thrust is toward producing anthropologists able to integrate their interest in a particular communicative mode into a broad spectrum of a communication approach to anthropology. This emphasis is felt to be particularly crucial in light of the traditional neglect of non-linguistic communication forms by anthropologists, and the corresponding tendency of anthropologists interested in this field to become peripheral to their own discipline.

Within the specialization in visual anthropology, the primary intent is to produce filmmakers who are technically competent and who can use their expertise to explore questions and problems of interest to social scientists.

Our knowledge of humanity as multimodal communicators is slight. We lack an understanding of the relationship between various codes, and in some instances, the nature of the codes themselves. The scientific study of and use of film and other mediated visual forms is only beginning. Because of its early involvement with still and motion pictures, anthropology has a more developed interest in the visual world. However, there are some indications that a visual sociology[2] and a visual psychology are emerging. Should these developments continue, students will have a wide and encompassing set of paradigms to choose from when they study and make film.

Jay Ruby is a Professor at Temple University.

Notes

1. This paper is a revised version of a presentation at the National Conference on the Teaching of Film, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, March 25-28, 1976. Portions of the paper appeared earlier in "The Teaching of Visual Anthropology at Temple," a paper given by Jay Ruby and Richard Chalfen at the American Anthropological Association meetings, New Orleans, 1973.

2. Programs in visual sociology exist at Northwestern University with Howard Becker and the University of California, San Diego, with Bennetta Jules-Rosette.

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TEACHING THE SOUNDTRACK

Claudia Gorbman

Ever since Louis Delluc began showing his appreciation for a good film by crying, "Ca, c'est du cinema!," one of the very basic tasks each successive critical school has set for itself has been to demonstrate, in its own vocabulary, the uniqueness of film as a medium of artistic expression. Once we understand the features of a filmic text which are cinema-specific, we may presumably start to construct an aesthetics specific to cinema also. Take Christian Metz: even though he does not pretend to outline any sort of aesthetics in *Langage et cinema*, he concentrates long and hard on establishing what constitutes cinematic specificity. Thus the uniquely *cinematic codes* of signification in films are derived in his writings from cinema's *matières d'expression*: that is, the five material bases for the systems of signifiers that interact to form filmic discourse. On the image-track there are (1) the photographic images themselves, and (2) "mentions écrites," or written (linguistic) material within the images. On the soundtrack, there is (3) verbal sound (dialogue, song lyrics, etc.), (4) noise or sound effects, and (5) music.

Owing to a sort of self-perpetuating preponderance of primarily visual minded theoreticians and aestheticians, the soundtrack—that locus of no fewer than three of Metz's cinematic *matières d'expression*—often gets slighted if not ignored outright. Arnheim's plaint that films went noisy in the late 'twenties, thereby becoming a sort of bastard art, represents only a small part of the mass of critical opinion responsible for the prevailing attitude. Kracauer, Spottiswoode, Lindgren,—indeed, almost everyone except Burch and Mitry—have contributed to our general disinterest in film sound through the officiousness with which they have treated the soundtrack (sound falls into *categories*: "parallel" or "counterpoint," and synchronous or asynchronous relation to the images on the screen, and its

narrative source is either "realistic" or "unrealistic." Period.) Additionally, since virtually anyone will admit that a film's visuals outweigh its soundtrack in importance, it has been the visuals' right to receive almost all the attention.

But why pass this prejudice on to students of film? Many of them in fact pay better attention to a soundtrack than do their more thoroughly trained film instructors, precisely because they have not yet fallen prey to the unbalanced critical heritage. An enormous wealth of possibilities for stylistic analysis lies in each film's soundtrack. A few suggestions for their exploration in film courses follow.

Pragmatics. The basic question: how to concentrate on a film soundtrack and direct students to study it intelligently? First, we suggest that making recorded tapes of a soundtrack available to students demonstrates little more than good intentions. Since the film distribution system makes the entire "text" available to students for only a brief time, the temptation exists to fragment, abstract, and preserve this text by showing stills and replaying soundtrack tapes after the film has gone. But the soundtrack means little without the images (though the converse is less true): how can we possibly explore a film's use of offscreen sound, sound creating various types of continuity among shots in a sequence, and the like, without the projected film? Soundtrack tapes leave the student with a fragmented, thus false, impression of the filmic text. The ideal teaching situation will involve at least two screenings of the film in question, with discussion and projection of textual segments scheduled between the showings-in-entirety.

History. Clearly, a fruitful approach to teaching the soundtrack is through film history. Preparation for such a unit of a general film course, or for an entire course treating the evolution of the sound film, should involve an introduction to the technical aspects of sound recording and reproduction: sound recording as *artifice*, as a highly selective activity (cf. Noel Burch's discussions of sound and the microphone in *Theory of Film Practice*: the sound stage, the microphone, mixing and dubbing.)

Suggestions for films

Studying one or two silent films, such as *The Last Laugh* or *Italian Straw Hat* (both these films full of auditory references), teaches as much about sound as do sound films themselves.

If at all possible, *The Jazz Singer* ought to be included, owing both to

its historical importance as the first sound film for all intents and purposes, and to its aptness as an example of the tangible problems inherent in early sound recording.

Classics of the late 'twenties and early 'thirties provide rich material for soundtrack study, because many films of this period share in the central concern of exploiting the possibilities offered by the new medium: Clair's *Sous les toits de Paris*, *Le Million*, or *A Nous la liberté*, Renoir's *La Chienne*, Lang's *M*, Pabst's *Kameradschaft*, Sternberg's *Blue Angel*, Sagan's *Maedchen in Uniform*, Hawks' *Scarface*, Browning's *Dracula*, Whale's *Frankenstein*, Schoedsack/Cooper's *King Kong*, Hitchcock's *Blackmail* through *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, Griffith's *Abraham Lincoln*, Mamoulian's *Applause* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Wellman's *Public Enemy*, LeRoy's *Little Caesar*, Marx Brothers films, and Berkeley musicals.

A suggested topic is the evolution of *genres* as they developed into the sound period: from *Underworld* to *Little Caesar*, *Public Enemy*, and *Scarface*; or from Keaton or Chaplin to Marx Brothers, Mae West, and W. C. Fields. This also suggests tracing developments in comedy style necessitated by sound: juxtapose silent and sound Harold Lloyd films, or Keaton's *General* or *Steamboat Bill, Junior* with the hilarious and little-known *Free and Easy* (1931).

Needless to say, the range of films after the early 'thirties is vast, and with the exception of Welles, generally virgin territory. Particularly instructive in their varied uses of sound are the earlier Godard films, with their conscious use of the omnidirectional microphone and their exploration of silence as well (cf. *Bande à part*); Fellini's earlier films, as well as many other Italians, whose tradition is to record sound after shooting and thus pay particular attention to choice and effect of sounds; Varda and Resnais; Bresson and Tati; Makaveyev and Straub; Coppola and Altman; and Mizoguchi and Kurosawa.

The poverty of current terminology for studying film sound attests to the need for better conceptual organization of this subject. The outline that follows has been made in the attempt to provide points of departure from which to examine the basis of sound codification in narrative films, and does not by any means claim to have covered *all* the possibilities of the soundtrack's narrative functioning. It has, however, proven extremely useful for teaching purposes in reminding the student how many choices are made in creating a soundtrack.

Some Parameters for Study and Teaching of the Soundtrack

1. *Sound source: narrative level* (1)
    - Diegetic
    - Extradiegetic
    - Metadiegetic
2. *Auditory space:* width (expansion/contraction), depth (amplification, flattening)
    - Auditory depth of field (2)
    - Onscreen sound, offscreen sound (3)
    - On-track sound, off-track sound (4)
    - Auditory masking (5)
    - "Sound focus" (6)
    - Sound texture (7)
3. *The three sound elements and their interrelations*
    - Predominance of speech, noise, or music
    - Effect of altering the hierarchy in the course of the film
    - Dialogue as noise, dialogue as music, noise as music, music as noise, etc. (8)
    - Auditory masking (5)

    a. *Music*
    - Spatiotemporal functions of diegetic music
    - Dramatic functions of diegetic music
        - Associations with characters, actions, "moods"
    - Music as icon: Mickeymousing
    - Music as index: diegetic music
    - Music as symbol: themes, leitmotifs
    - Cultural codes: classical warhorses (9), other precomposed music, style of specially composed film scores
    - Musical silence (10)
    - Musical rhythm and cinematic rhythm
    - Musical form and film form (duration and structure of music with relation to film segments)

    b. *Silence*
    - Diegetic, extradiegetic, metadiegetic (11)
    - Structuring silences
4. *"Ideational" content of sound*: sound's relation to larger filmic structures
    - Repetition (auditory themes)

Continuity/discontinuity (12)
Sound as metaphor
Sound as punctuation (13)
Sound as source of diegetic information: trustworthy or untrustworthy
Truth of dialogue
Reliability of diegetic sounds
Irony
Ambiguity

References

(1) Diegetic: sounds whose (apparent) source is situated in the diegetic space/time.

Extradiegetic: "soundtrack" sound, not perceivable by diegetic characters.

Metadiegetic: sound apparently "narrated" or imagined by a character as secondary narrator, e.g., in *Scarlet Street*, the murdered wife's voice that rings in Edward G. Robinson's ears; likewise, in *Blackmail*, the famous "knife" auditory hallucination; in *Blow-up*, the sounds of tennis as Hemmings walks away from mimed tennis match. Ultimately, these terms are arbitrary and unsuitable for careful film analysis, since what is metadiegetic for one auditor may be extradiegetic for another. But the distinctions can be very useful pedagogically for outlining the very problem of levels of narrativity in films, and they also lead to considerable enlightenment in describing cinematic styles.

(2) I.e., the sensation of the apparent distance from microphone to sound source, based on the relation in the physical world between a sound's intensity and the distance from its source to the listener. Perturbing the continuity demanded by "realistic" auditory depth of field produces effects as varied as those in *Touch of Evil* and *Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*.

(3) For instance, in a given scene, whose voice/what sounds are privileged to "color" the image from offscreen? Cf., for example, its role in sexist domination in *King Kong*, as discussed in recent studies by Judith Mayne and Thierry Kuntzel.

(4) If visual space is defined as either onscreen (perceived, explicitly inscribed in the image) or offscreen (inferred, implicitly present in the diegesis), then the analogous definition for sound, in its own terms, is

the following: *on-track*—perceived, inscribed in the soundtrack, and *off-track*—diegetically inferred, but not heard on the soundtrack, cf., characters arguing behind cafe windows in *Sous les toits de Paris*.

(5) Auditory masking occurs when one diegetic noise has apparently drowned out another on the soundtrack. This works as a structuring principle, for instance, in both versions of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*—e.g., a scene in which the noise of a grim fight in a church is obliterated by the organ playing sacred music. Note also the strong audio-visual *irony* created in this particular instance of masking.

(6) As the camera lens sharpens selected elements in visual space, the mixed soundtrack can give a similar impression of picking out sounds in auditory space. For example, certain lines of dialogue are rendered clearly perceptible in the hubbub of seven or eight voices talking simultaneously in some scenes in *His Girl Friday*. "Soft focus" exists in many scenes of *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*; and sharp and "deep" focus in films by Welles. This idea operates at the very center of *The Conversation*.

(7) The texture of recorded sound—muffled, resonant, thin, etc.—informs cinematic space and the volumes it contains. A whistle echoed across a mountain lake differs in texture from a whistle down a long corridor, or a whistle in a padded recording studio.

(8) These considerations enter into most films, but receive paramount attention in Polonsky's *Force of Evil*, in the films of Grémillon with Roland-Manuel's concrete musical scores, and in Rivette's *La Religieuse*, to name a few.

(9) The consequences of adopting well-known musical classics into films have been widely discussed, usually in normative terms (as, for that matter, have most issues connected with film music—as if certain techniques or styles of music have fixed values and meanings no matter what the context). In fact, the old standards (American folk songs in Ford, Wagner and Rossini in Fellini, the Hallelujah Chorus in Bunuel's *Viridiana*) serve many different functions.

(10) The absence of music can have expressive value. When the orchestra temporarily stops during the solitary dance in *Jezebel*, there is momentary relief; when the band stops at Rico's party in *Party Girl*, tension results. The first sequence of *Public Enemy* is inaugurated by a title shot, "1905," accompanied by gay, cheery music. The second sequence has no music accompanying its "1913" title; silence sets a more somber tone to it. Thus the music's presence for Sequence I renders the absence for Sequence II a meaningful one.

(11) Silence should once and for all be considered the fourth component of

the soundtrack. Aside from positive sound, there are several distinguishable types of *absent sound*: diegetic silence (with "room tone" for interiors and correspondingly subtle noise for exteriors), extradiegetic silence (absolute soundlessness on the soundtrack), and/or metadiegetic silence (cf. the caveat in note 1), wherein a character has seemingly "tuned out" the sounds around him; an example of the latter is found in *The Best Years of our Lives* in the sequence where Dana Andrews visits the airplane graveyard: noise of demolition crews gives way to music in complicity with Andrews' reverie, Cf. also note 10.

(12) This rubric encompasses various types of continuity: spatiotemporal continuity among shots and between segments, and structural continuities. A striking use of musical discontinuity is found in Resnais' *Je t'aime, je t'aime*, when a scientific experiment goes awry and the protagonist in the time chamber leaps from one point to another in his past—literally from shot to shot, in filmic moments more frighteningly marvellous in their cinematic reflexivity than the darkroom work in *Blow-up*. Penderecki's choral score, heretofore heard "musically," in its continuity, begins also to be neard discontinuously, as if cut up into auditory shots or strips of magnetic tape, and spliced back together out of order.

(13) Sound may punctuate entire sequences—indeed, music usually punctuates a film's beginning and ending—or individual lines of dialogue,cf. Putty-Nose's lines that end with the added emphasis of his pool cue hitting the cue ball, in *Public Enemy*.

Claudia Gorbman teaches Comparative Literature at Indiana University.

FOR A CLOSE CINEMATIC ANALYSIS

Vlada Petric

The method of close cinematic analysis concentrates on locating cinematic features in films and discusses the ways in which these features relate to a film's content. This method rests upon the assumption that it is the integration of the cinematic features with the content itself which makes a film function in the way that cannot be experienced in any other medium. It is obvious that all the elements and components of a film attain their full cinematic impact and proper meaning only when perceived within the overall structure of a film *screened* in agreeable conditions; yet, one can study them separately and closely in order to discern their complex interrelationship. Such a structural examination of each separate aspect of a film helps students understand the proper cinematic impact of a particular filmic device and its contribution to the meaning of a film. This method, accordingly, discourages students from merely verbalizing their personal impressions and associations stirred up by the film seen, and compels them to substantiate their interpretations analytically and document their criticism by scholarly arguments. Following Eisenstein's concept of the analytical procedure, students are encouraged to use a method which may lead them along "that same road that the author (filmmaker) traveled in creating the image, and forming the integral unity of his work." By discovering the "creative road" through which the author "traveled" in making his film, the analyst becomes capable of defining the cinematic strategy by which a film is conceived and realized.

Everybody agrees that film as an art form has unique properties different from those of the other arts, and that some films are more valuable as cinematic achievements than others. Hence, cinematic analysis searches for the specific cinematic devices that acknowledge cinema as *cinema*, and makes some films "better" than others from a cinematic point of view.

This method is not concerned with cinematic features for their own sake; rather, it deals with the question of *how* cinematic features contribute to the meaning of a film *as a whole*. Why the preoccupation with *cinematic* experience? Because the message of a film becomes more effective when delivered *via* cinematic means rather than through theatrical, literary, or painterly ones. The cinematic features of a film contribute to its overall impact and meaning only if they are fully integrated with other components, including narrative ones. There are too many examples in which filmic devices remain mechanical trickery without any deeper signification (e.g., Monty Python), while, on the other hand, there are classic films which do not use overt cinematic devices and yet are important artistic achievements, fine and powerful works of cinematic art (e.g., *Nanook of the North*), proving that their value is of a different kind, because they replace cinematic features by other components which may function *cinematically* in their own—not necessarily kinesthetic—way.

To give a general idea of what the "specific filmic elements" are, let it suffice to name here some of the most obvious devices available only in cinema, keeping in mind that a full description of these terms is properly the subject of another paper. Elements of the film's structure, which are *unique* to this medium, include: camera movement, shooting angle in motion, deep focus with moving objects in perspective, change of focus during the same shot, multiple exposure and dissolves, moving masks and arises, changing shot composition (including light and color), accelerated motion and slow motion, montage (in the temporal duration), mise-en-frame, and mise-en-shot (as opposed to the theatrical mise-en-scène), the texture of motion picture photography (as opposed to the texture of still photography), cinemascope combined with 3D, and sync-sound combined with stereophonic sound. Among the components of the film structure, which are *borrowed* from other arts and media and properly adjusted (or not adjusted at all!) to the requirements of this medium, are: the narrative (plot-story), dialogue, acting, mise-en-scène (as opposed to the filmic mise-en-shot), decor, costumes, make-up, titles and intertitles, static frame composition, freeze-frame (slides), post and/or synchronized sound, and composed musical accompaniment. Some of these terms call for a professional explanation of their meaning, particularly the difference between the mise-en-scène and mise-en-shot. Again, this is a subject for a separate paper, but if readers want to get the basic information about these terms, they can find them in the book *Lessons with Eisenstein* by Vladimir Nizhny (London, 1962).

Close cinematic analysis seems indispensable at this juncture in film education, when cinema studies at the university stand at a crossroads. Many

teachers and students feel the necessity of approaching film from a scholarly standpoint, instead of continuing with the interpretative literary analysis which still predominates on both the undergraduate and graduate levels of film studies. With the new technological facilities which permit a close examination of film structure, it is now possible to study rigorously the formal aspects of the film, and their relation to the content, including the narrative and performing components. This division between the film's form and content is done *only* with the purpose of allowing a type of scrutiny that can be and must be later integrated into the understanding of the films *as a whole*.

Nobody seriously interested in cinema as an art form can claim that a scholarly film analysis can be done by the mere viewing of a film, followed by a haphazard discussion about the meaning of a film's narrative. It is as if students of the fine arts were asked to engage in serious debate over a painting which had been whisked past their eyes, or as if students of literature were required to consider the stylistic features of a poem, novel, or play which they had only heard read aloud once. One must admit that such an attitude in teaching cinema is absurd, and totally incompatible with those university courses which teach the other arts. Yet, we are again and again encountering old-fashioned teachers who persistently oppose the serious and systematic study of films. When one enters a classroom in which such film courses take place, it is often impossible to discern from the discussion whether a film, novel, or play is under consideration. This antiacademic attitude has outlived its day.

The only way to analyze a film closely and systematically may be by means of the analyst projector ("Athena") in classes, and the editing table ("Steenbeck") for smaller groups of students. These two technical tools permit the teacher and his/her students to scrutinize the individual film's structure, so as to understand *how* a formal cinematic device operates in relation to the narrative continuity of the sequence or a single shot. By being able to stop the film at any point, by going backward as well as forward both at slow and fast speed, and by "freezing" the frames, the students have an opportunity to examine all aspects of the shot's composition (be it one frame-one shot, or the long take) and to anatomize the montage of the sequence. Only with the help of an analyst projector is it possible to demonstrate in the classroom the principle of cinematic integration between numerous and various components of a film's structure. For a more exhaustive study of a film, it is necessary to execute—on the editing table—a breakdown of the crucial sequences which exemplify the filmmaker's strategy. A shot-by-shot breakdown can be useful in solving a problem of film criticism. François Truffaut, in one of his critical essays,

wrote: "I don't think you will find effective devices in *Last year at Marienbad* which cannot also be found in *Vertigo*." (Cahiers du cinema, no. 138, 1962; or *The New Wave*, by Peter Graham, Doubleday, 1968, p. 105.) How can one check such a critical statement? How do you make a comparative study of Resnais' and Hitchcock's films? Before one comes to any conclusion, one must closely describe paradigmatic sequences in both films and *then* begin with an analytical comparison leading to a specific judgement that may agree or disagree with Truffaut's statement.

The second stage of cinematic analysis involves the examination of specific cinematic devices from both a formal and contextual point of view (including all necessary background research). The third stage deals with the crucial problem of integration between the cinematic devices and all other features and components of a film's structure, mainly narrative and performing. Finally, there is a fourth stage at which the analyst possesses enough information to formulate his own interpretation of a sequence, and to "read" the film as a whole. Obviously, the first three stages of close cinematic analysis are possible only by means of technical equipment while the fourth is, indeed, a consequence of the previous ones. Since in many great films the real cinematic impact occurs at the moment of collision between the two shots and in the transition of the various movements in the two neighboring shots, it is impossible to perceive these phenomena without the analysis projector. Analyzing films on the editing table or analyst projector, students perceive all nuances in the motion which occurs within a shot and notice the subtle expressions of the actors' faces and their bodies' gestures. The possibility of stopping and slowing down the viewing speed allows students to execute a precise verbal description of a sequence, including each frame's composition, mise-en-scène, mise-en-frame, and mise-en-shot, the order and duration of shots, camera movement, angle and shooting, change of musical themes and sound. By being forced themselves to describe all visual and auditory details occuring on the screen, students find themselves in the situation of perceiving more than in a random viewing of the same film. Having all this information summarized in written form, one can begin to particularize the structure of the sequence and discern the strategy which the filmmaker used in conceiving his work.

Needless to say, close cinematic analysis is useful not only for the students in cinema studies, but also for those learning practical filmmaking. Professional cinematic analysis of a film's formal devices and their relationship to the film's content unquestionably assists students of filmmaking to grasp the creative technique of various directors, the cinematic values of important films, and the stylistic features of different genres. This

enables students of filmmaking to absorb and creatively apply the acquired knowledge to their own efforts in a transformed and inventive manner, or to develop their own style by opposing various traditional forms of cinematic expression.

As such, close cinematic analysis should lead to a greater cross-fertilization between the practical and the theoretical aspects of studying cinema at the university, where these two areas of teaching have often been antagonistically divided.

From all that has been said, it follows that cinematic analysis is not opposed to the interpretation of a film. It only suggests that any "reading" of a film or a sequence must be justified by a substantiated analysis of the *actual* cinematic structure and its relation to the narrative development of the film. It also proposes that the analyst always demonstrate whether the message of a film is expressed in cinematic terms, and to what degree the film's specific properties enhance (or lessen) the cinematic impact of a sequence or the entire film.

It goes without saying that students have to be allowed to see a film as many times as they wish without interruption. But, once they have considerably satisfied their "love of movies," they must begin to analyze the film closely, cinematically, and structurally, if they aspire to do it in a scholarly way. It is obvious and easily demonstrable, that by a close scrutiny of the introductory sequence of Hitchcock's *Notorious* on the "Athena" or "Steenback," students immediately notice the symbolic viewpoint of the camera set-up, along with many other cinematic devices foreshadowed in the film's prologue and later developed into a visual signature and metaphorical accents of the climatic moments in the story progression. It is not necessary that the students in the university wait for years, going through repeated film viewings, in order to uncover such self-evident facts, among them symbolic angle of shooting.

Everybody must agree with Andrew Sarris when he says that "there is so much to be seen" in great films (*The Village Voice*, April 15, 1966) but this can be done more professionally and faster by close cinematic analysis of a film's structure.

I want to conclude with a straightforward avowal: close cinematic analysis may be applied with the greatest efficiency to those films whose structure is complex or whose meaning and impact stem from the full interaction of both filmic elements and borrowed components that are sucessfully adapted to the needs of this medium. Apparently, this methodology encourages a *structural* analysis of the films, since its chief concern is the rigorous scrutiny of the film's structure in all respects—a scrutiny that is close, cinema-

tic, and structural in its insistence to locate, examine, and interpret those features of a film which cannot be detected and properly understood without an in-depth analytical approach to cinema.

If an outstanding film, however, does not possess a manifold cinematic structure, i.e., if it lacks sufficient filmic and filmically transmuted constituents, then its existent values can be better analyzed by alternative methods that are more thematic, literary, historical, anthropological, philosophical, phenomenological, technological, or even impressionistic in their approach. Close cinematic analysis does not deny the validity of such methods for the films that require this type of analysis; rather, it merely—and frankly—admits that the tools of this specific methodology can produce maximum results when employed to the analytical examination of those films which possess ample filmic elements or components appropriately integrated with the content, whatever it may be.

Being not primarily an evaluative methodology, close cinematic analysis is most fruitful when used as a stage in the process of analyzing films which have already been evaluated by other methodologies and accepted as important works. This is particularly the case in a scholarly reexamination of great classic films, when cinematic analysis can be used to determine, first of all, *whether* a film contains a complex cinematic structure; *how* that structure is organized on all levels, and *what* type of integration is achieved in the specific sequences and film as a whole.

To give an example of the first stage in close cinematic analysis, I will quote here a shot-by-shot breakdown made by a student in my course on Cinematic Analysis. This is a detailed description of the first twenty-four shots in Robert Bresson's film, *A Man Escaped*, which both Andre Bazin and François Truffaut considered as one of the most crucial films in the first decade of the French post-war cinema, a film whose cinematic structure is so extraordinary that "it resembles no other." The quoted shot-by-shot breakdown served the student to execute further stages of analyzing the film's structure and substantiating his own interpretation of Bresson's masterpiece. Thus, all the statements about Bresson's directorial style, cinematic impact of the significant sequences, and various implications of the film's message, are derived from the shot-by-shot breakdown, used as the documentation during the analysis of the film on an editing table. The introductory sequence also contains the frame-enlargements of each shot, and when necessary—as in the first and the last shot—several frame en-

largements illustrate the major phases of the action and the different compositional units through which the same take evolves. In a more rigorous scrutiny, of course, the frame-enlargements would display all the varying phases of the shot composition, so that the students could clearly see how framing *fluctuates* in the course of a shot's duration—which is one of the sources of the kinesthetic impact of the motion picture image. Similarly, the notation of the length of each separate shot (given in feet for the print in 16mm) permits the students to reconstruct the adequate tempo of the changing set-ups, which is a crucial part of Bresson's technique of "composing" the rhythmic flow of his film. This is not simply the problem of so-called *decoupage* (i.e., division of a sequence in shots and set-ups); rather, it is the initial step in the determination of the "musical" organization of the sequence—an element which has considerable influence on the filmed event and its meaning. Although not so apparent, the temporal value of a shot is a structural feature which plays a large role in the integration of all elements and components, intensifying the mood of the event shown on the screen. Integrated with equally diversifying camera points of view, as well as the shot scales, duration of images contributes to the "structural pulsation" (Bresson's own term) of the film's overall organization. In films like *A Man Escaped*, which establish their cinematic integrity not by superficial visuality and optical trickery, but by a subtle integration of all elements, their overall cinematic structure often figuratively reflects the meaning of the work as a whole, thus enhancing their metaphorical signification. Some of these features as they appear in the quoted sequence are discussed at the end of this paper.

The narrative line of the introductory sequence to *A Man Escaped* is very simple, but conveyed *via* pure visual terms, without any dialogue. A man and two other persons are seen in the back seat of a moving car. From the man's behaviour and the fact that the two other persons sitting next to him are handcuffed together, we gather that they are on their way to prison. The man sneaks a look at some objects in the car, or directs his glance at the traffic moving in the street. From time to time, he furtively tests the handle of the car door. After repeated hesitations, he abruptly throws the door open and jumps out of the moving car. The camera remains focused on the inside of the back seat of the car, while through the rear window we see several men run after the escapee. They shoot at him and scream in German. After a few seconds, the man is brought back to the car by a person who puts handcuffs first on his own left, and then on the man's right hand. This person (obviously a German agent) then whips the man with a pistol which he holds in his right hand. The location of the narrative, in time and space, is marked

by the title which appears before the sequence begins, and which reads: "LYION, 1943."

The visual action of this sequence is articulated in 24 separate shots, or, if we include the various compositional units of the first and last shots, in 30 different visual units. The shots and units can be divided into five groups, each related to a specific stage of the development of the narrative. The four units of the first shot depict the details of the car interior (shots 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d). In fact, it is possible to divide the first shot into five separate units, because there is an additional close-up of the man, which follows immediately the unit 1a. The next five shots reveal the man's relationship to the world outside the moving car (shots 2, 3, and 4), and his attempt to open the car door (shots 5 and 6). The following eight shots focus on the man's relation to the other persons in the car and their actions (shots 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19). The four closing shots reiterate the man's concern for the world outside the car (shots 20, 21, 22, and 23). The last shot—with its four compositional units—shows the man jumping out of the car, his attempt to escape, his being chased and finally brought back to the car by an agent who hits him on the head with a pistol (shot 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d). Again, this shot could be divided into five separate units if we include the moment when the German agent puts handcuffs on his and the man's hands. Thus the total number of visual units in this sequence would amount to 32, instead of 30.

What follows is a cinematic segmentation of the sequence's narrative structure and the continuity of events as they occur on the screen. The montage concept which Bresson uses in this sequence clearly demonstrates his specific manner of dissecting the photographed events in order to increase the tension of the overall narrative development of the introduction to his film. This two minute introduction develops with no verbal exchange between the main character and the extras, while the sound track functions as a dramatic intensification of the event. The narrative of this introduction begins as a subdued action focused on the subtle psychological reactions of the characters and suddenly culminates in a strong physical climax. The introduction itself contains its own prelude, ascent, tension, delay of the crisis, physical climax, and a rapid resolution of the crisis, with a cinematic punctuation placed at the end of the sequence, i.e., a dissolve during which the last image of this introduction merges with the first image of the following sequence. Thus, as a structure in itself, the montage composition of this sequence is representative of the montage concept carried throughout the film. On the contextual level, the only difference is that, at the end of the film, the man finally succeeds in escaping from the German prison.

A MAN ESCAPED: A Shot-by-Shot Description of the First 24 Shots*

This is a shot-by-shot breakdown of the introductory sequence in Robert Bresson's "*Un Condamné a mort s'est échappé*" (1956), made by a student in my Cinematic Analysis course. The scale of shots is indicated by the letters "LS" (long shot), "MS" (medium shot), "MCU" (medium close-up), and "CU" (close-up). The measurements are in 16mm feet.

Fade cut from blackness.

1. COMPOUND SHOT accomplished by the camera panning and tilting, which creates four separate compositional units. Eighteen feet. This is the longest shot in the sequence. The four compositional units of this shot are:
   a) CU (slight high, left angle, interior, low light, newsreel texture of photography, panning, tilting), 8.5 feet.
      Composition: A pair of white hands fill the center of the frame coming from the left to right against a dark background, almost black in the upper right corner of the frame; in the lower right corner of the frame are two dark-trousered knees, bent in sitting; the man's right thigh is in the lower left corner, and his dark-suited left forearm comes down from the upper left corner.
      Action: As the sequence fades up from blackness, the hands slowly turn their palms upward, then back palms down, one on each other; then the left hand slowly slides off the left knee forward and to the left, the camera panning slightly right and tilting slightly up with the motion to reveal an inside car door handle on the right of the frame and a car window in the upper center and right edge; the little finger of the left hand points out and carefully depresses the door handle; the hand is then slowly raised and drawn back, the camera pans back left and tilts up to follow it, revealing a second car window in the left corner motion; the left, upward movement of the camera causes the hand to exit frame left.
      Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

* Actual frame enlargements appear on pages 474-477

b) MCU (slight left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography, panning, tilting), 4.5 feet.

Composition: The young man (Fontaine), seen from mid-chest to the top of his head, dressed in a dark suit and open-collared white shirt, fills the right side of the frame; the left side is filled by a man with a mustache, his dark suit and white shirt torn and dishevelled, the left sleeve of his jacket torn off; the center foreground is the back of the car, the rear window of which extends into the upper left center of the frame from behind the mustached man's head to the upper center of the frame; through the window the passing buildings can be seen.

Action: As the camera pans and tilts to the two men who exchange furtive glances, then the man with the mustache glances downward into his lap and the camera follows his glance continuing to pan left and tilt downwards, where the third man is sitting in the car.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

c) CU (very slight high left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography, panning, tilting), 2 feet.

Composition: The man's right arm extends down from the upper central edge, his hand rests on his knee in the lower right corner; his white shirt and part of his tattered black jacket fill the upper right corner of the frame; from the upper left corner, the third man's left arm, dressed in a white striped shirt, extends down into the frame; the third man is not visible, while his left arm rests on his knee in the lower left corner; the two men's wrists are handcuffed together.

Action: The handcuffed hands jiggle back and forth with the movement of the car; after a second or two, the camera pans right and tilts upward, passing over the mustached man's left arm and shoulder, his face passing through the upper left corner of the frame.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

d) MCU (left angle, interior, documentary-like texture of photography), 3 feet.

Composition: Fontaine seen from mid-chest to the top of his head, fills the left and center of the frame; a piece of the rear window on the center left edge of the frame and the car's side window fills the right side of the frame passing buildings visible through it.

Action: Fontaine is looking straight ahead, slightly to the right of the camera, with a detached, alienated expression on his face.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

Cinematic device: The movement of the camera acts as an editing device to divide the first shot into four separate units and preserve the notion of space for the viewer.

2. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography), 5 feet.

Composition: The upper half of the frame is filled with the view outside the front window of the car, the road occupying the upper center with a line of trees on the upper left part of the frame; the lower half of the frame is filled with the dark dashboard of the car; the driver's right forearm and hand on the steering wheel are visible in the lower left corner and in the upper right corner, and the edge of the frame is the dark silhouette of the back of a man's head covered with a hat.

Action: The car proceeds down the road approaching and passing two pedestrians walking off the road into the trees on the left, and then approaching the back of a truck, passes on the left side of the road.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

3. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 5 feet.

Composition: Fontaine, seen from mid-chest to the top of his head, fills the center of the frame; the car's side window fills the left quarter of the frame; part of the rear window just slightly enters into the frame from the upper left edge and the mustached man's left shoulder is visible in the lower left corner.

Action: With the passing buildings visible through the windows, Fontaine's eyes glance downwards into his lap and then back up, straight ahead, slightly to the right.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

4. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior newsreel texture of photography) 1.5 feet.

Composition: Same as shot 2.

Action: Some distance in front of the still-moving car, a horse-drawn wagon loaded with crates begins to pull out into the road from the left.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

5. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.

Composition: Same as shot 3.

Action: His left arm slightly extended, glancing downward, Fontaine's eyes glance upward and straight ahead slightly to the right of the camera.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

6. CU (slight high angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.

Composition: Against a background of the dark interior of the side of the car, Fontaine's left hand, palm down, fills the center of the frame, the side window visible on the upper right edge and corner, a small piece of the door handle just visible at the center right edge of the frame, and Fontaine's knees in the lower corner.

Action: Fontaine's hand slowly inches forward towards the door handle.

Sound: Low noise of a car motor.

7. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.

Composition: Same as shots 3 and 5.

Action: The car still moving, Fontaine continues to look straight ahead, slightly to the right of the camera.

Sound: Low noise of car motor.

8. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.

Composition: Same as shots 2 and 4.

Action: The horse-drawn wagon, loaded with crates and with a second horse tied behind it, fills the front windshield as it continues to pull out into the road from the left; the car slows to avoid hitting it.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, horses' hooves on pavement.

9. CU (slight high right angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.

Composition: The driver's right forearm and hand, clutching the gear shift lever, fills the lower left and central edge of the frame, against the dark background of the car's dashboard; part of the steering wheel is visible in the upper left corner, and the keys in the ignition are visible at the upper right edge of the frame.

Action: Moving his arm upward in the frame, the driver shifts gears and puts his hand on the steering wheel, passing his arm upward through the frame, his right elbow finally filling the upper left corner.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, thunk of gear shift, horses' hooves on pavement.

10. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography), 2 feet.
    Composition: Same as shots 2, 4, and 8.
    Action: The car passes around the left side of the wagon and the horse tied behind it, then passes to the right of the truck parked on the left side of the road; and again the road is visible clear ahead, lined by trees on both sides, the right side quite bright in the sunlight.
    Sound: Low noise of car motor, horses' hooves on pavement
11. CU (slight high left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 0.5 foot.
    Composition: Same as shot 6.
    Action: Fontaine's left hand slowly inches back to rest on his left knee.
    Sound: Low noise of car motor.
12. MCU (slight left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 3.5 feet.
    Composition: Same as shot 1b.
    Action: Fontaine furtively glances frame left at the man with the mustache whose eyes sneakingly glance back at him from right; then they look back straight ahead slightly to the right of the camera.
    Sound: Low noise of car motor.
13. CU (slight high right angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 1 foot.
    Composition: Same as shot 9.
    Action: The driver's hand moves the gear shift lever downwards, his arm moving fast from the center to the bottom area of the frame.
    Sound: Low noise of car motor, clunk of changing gear.
14. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 5 feet.
    Composition: Same as shots 3, 5, and 7.
    Action: Buildings continuing to move by the windows from right to left, Fontaine continues to look straight ahead, slightly to the right of the camera.
    Sound: Low noise of car motor.
15. CU (slight high left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 0.5 foot.

Composition: Same as shots 6 and 11.

Action: Fontaine's left hand lifts off his left knee and slowly inches towards the door handle, which is seen in the center of the frame.

Sound: Low noise of car motor.

16. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 2 feet.

Composition: Same as shots 3, 5, 7, and 14.

Action: His face more intense, but still looking straight forward and slightly to the right of the camera, Fontaine leans slightly forward, the camera panning slightly right to keep him centered in the frame, causing the small piece of the rear window visible on the upper left edge of the frame to exit from left.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, clang of trolley.

17. CU (slight high left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 15 frames. This is the shortest shot in the sequence.

Composition: Same as shots 6, 11, and 15.

Action: Fontaine's left hand, almost touching the door handle, is quickly brought back to his knee.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, clang of trolley.

18. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography), 24 frames.

Composition: Same as end of shot 16.

Action: His eyes downcast, Fontaine slightly draws back his head from its slightly leaning-forward position, buildings still passing by the side window that fill the right third of the frame.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, clang of trolley.

19. CU (slight high right angle, interior,newsreel texture of photography), 23 frames.

Composition: Same as shot 13.

Action: The driver's right hand and forearm move the gear shift lever up, moving his hand from the right side of the bottom edge of the frame up to the center of the frame.

Sound: Low noise of car motor. thunk of gear shift.

20. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography, panning), 2 feet.

Composition: Same as in shots 3, 5, 7, 14, and 16.

Action: Now sitting back in his original position, Fontaine, raises his eyes from a slightly downward glance (possibly observing the shifting of gears) to look again straight ahead

out of the front window; he apparently sees something of interest, because his face becomes more intense and he leans slightly forward again, the camera pans slightly forward with him, causing the small piece of the rear window visible at the upper left edge of the frame to exit frame left.

Sound: Low noise of car motor, trolley clang, and rattle of the approaching trolley.

21. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography), 29 frames.

Composition: Same as shots 2, 4, 8, and 10.

Action: A line of trees visible in front of the still-moving car while a trolley car enters the frame from the upper right-hand corner, and begins to cross diagonally in front of the car from the upper right corner towards the center of the left edge of the frame; the front of the trolley reaches the center of the frame.

Sound: Very low noise of car motor and roar of approaching trolley.

22. MCU (left angle, interior, newsreel texture of photography, 19 frames.

Composition: Same as end of shots 16, and 20, and shot 18.

Action: Leaning even more forward so that his face is closer to the right than the left edge of the frame, Fontaine stares forward to the right of the camera, his mouth slightly open in tension and anticipation.

Sound: Very low noise of car motor and roar of approaching trolley.

23. LS (slight right angle, both interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography), 37 frames.

Composition: Same as shots 2, 4, 8, 10, and 21.

Action: The trolley car now fills the windshield quite close to the car, still moving diagonally across the frame from the upper right to the center left; the car stops abruptly to avoid hitting it.

Sound: Noise of the car and approaching trolley.

24. MS and LS (slight left angle, interior and exterior, newsreel texture of photography, panning), 16 feet. This is the second of the longest shots in the sequence.

Composition: Fontaine seen from the stomach to the top of his head, leaning forward and staring intently straight ahead to the right of the camera, fills the right half of the frame against

a background of the dark interior of the car; the left half is filled by the man with the mustache, also seen from the stomach to the top of his head; the rear window of the car extends into the frame from the upper left edge, passing behind the mustached man's head into the upper center area of the frame (24a).

Action: During the action, this shot reveals the following stages of mise-en-frame:

Jumping from his seat, Fontaine exits from right, uncovering a small view through the left side window; the car following behind is seen through the rear window as a man jumps out of the car, fires a gun, followed by another man, then by a third, all disappearing behind the right edge of the rear window; after a couple of seconds, a fourth man runs by so that his torso passes by the rear window from left to right; the man with mustache continues to look ahead (24b).

After another few seconds of no action visible, Fontaine reenters the frame from the right, while the camera pans to the right, uncovering the car's side window and the open door with men walking fast outside from right to left; a man in a dark suit and a dark hat with a light hatband, enters the right foreground of the frame; the camera pans further to the right to place Fontaine on the left side of the frame; the man puts handcuffs first on Fontaine's right, and then his left hand (24c).

The man grasps Fontaine by his jacket, pulls him forward, and raises a pistol held by the barrel in his right hand; Fontaine bows his head frame left, as the gun is raised higher and begins to descend onto Fontaine's head; at the same instant, the image begins to dissolve into the first shot of the next sequence, creating, for the moment, an almost abstract composition of moving details (24d).

Sound: Footsteps, German voices, passing trolley, three gunshots, handcuffs clanging.

The quoted shot-by-shot breakdown can serve as material for a close study of the introductory sequence in Bresson's *A Man Escaped*, since this description of the shots provides all basic data needed for an analytical

scrutiny of the filmic elements, "borrowed" components, and their integration, which forms the sequence's overall structure. In a way, this breakdown can also be seen as a methodological guideline for the analysis of any sequence, as it contains the indispensable evidence which must be used to document each conclusion related to the sequence. To facilitate the visual "reading" of each shot, frame-enlargements have been reproduced in a supplement at the end of the text, so that the reader may follow the analysis with approximate notion of the shot composition. Though the frame-enlargements (i.e., stills) do not allow the spectator to become cinematically involved in the action on the screen, they nevertheless can serve as a solid ground for assessing the filmmaker's cinematic strategy as regards to his/her structuring of the film or a sequence. They can, in particular, help the students understand the specificity of the shot composition (as opposed to the still composition), distribution of lights and darkness within the frame, editing (of course, related to the scale of shots since we are dealing here with "freeze-frames"), visibility in depth, and the changing point of view.

The next phase in the analytical procedure involves the examination of each separate filmic device found in the various shots, and in the discovering of its relationship to other devices, including the narrative content of the shot. After that follows the most significant stage: establishing the type and degree of integration among all the filmic devices and other elements and components in the sequence. Only after all this has been done, may students begin to develop their own interpretation of the sequence, determining its connotative implications, and its function within the meaning of the entire film—all of which, of course, affects the final evaluation of the film.

The twenty-four shots of the introductory sequence in *A Man Escaped*, with the total duration of slightly over two minutes (i.e., 82 feet in the 16mm print), depict a simple action: the initial attempt of the leading character to escape from his captors. The sequence is valuable for study, because it successfully fuses the narrative continuity and the cinematic representation of the story. In his article, "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo" (*Ecran Français*, no. 144, 1948), Alexandre Astruc defines the cinematic strategy of Bresson's early works as "a form in which and by which an artist can express his thoughts, however abstract they may be, or translate his obsessions exactly as it is done in the contemporary essay or novel, and that is why I would like to call this new age of cinema the age of *caméra-stylo* (camera-pen). By it I mean that the cinema will gradually break free from the tyranny of what is visual, from the image for its own sake, from the immediate and concrete demands of the narrative, to become a means of writing just as flexible and subtle as written language."

(*The New Wave*, Peter Graham, ed., p. 18). In *A Man Escaped*, Bresson developed this strategy to the point that the spectator really feels that each image reflects the inner world of the character, and that the way the images are shot comments upon the event shown on the screen. He meticulously anatomizes a series of events and circumstances in which we see a political prisoner, condemmed to death by the Germans in occupied France, making a long preparation for escape, and, along with his friend, finally achieving freedom. Retrospectively, it becomes obvious that the introductory sequence epitomizes the structure of the entire film, revealing the basic principle of Bresson's directorial procedure which greatly differs from the traditional narrative "discourse" and conventions used in the "suspense movies."

Naturally, the students want to know how does Bresson's strategy differ, and what are the peculiarities of his personal style? This can be demonstrated only by a close examination of each specific shot, using the breakdown (accompanied by frame enlargements) as documentation, during viewing the sequence on an editing table or analyst projector.

The relatively fixed camera set-up, and the continuous, slightly high angle of shooting, represents the third person's point of view from which the narrative is "seen." By its repetition, this "objective" point of view soon becomes the spectator's view as well, forcing him/her to participate in the narrative text. Significantly, in this introduction, the subjective point of view is shown in the depicting of the sight (urban landscape) which the captive man (hero) may see looking outside the front window of the moving car over the driver's forearm and man's head in the foreground (as in shot 2). The significant details, such as the close-up of the door handle (as in shot 6) are photographed from the position which the hero obviously occupies. Reversely, the close-ups of the driver's hand clutching the gear-shift lever (as in shot 9), is photographed from "nobody's" point of view, regardless of the fact that these shots follow the hero's close-up in which his eyes are downcast. Hence, these significant objects in close-ups function on two levels: they are the filmmaker's cinematic comments on the action (with which the spectators identify), while, at the same time, they are dramatic accents in the narrative continuity. This strategy of mixing the third point of view with the subjective attitude of the main character, is the structural pattern of presenting the narrative throughout the film, properly reflecting the hero's state of mind—permanently active, often overtense, but never overt, even less communicative.

The first compound shot in this sequence supplies us with the stylistic paradigm of Bresson's shooting technique which can be acknowledged as his

directorial signature, his personal cinematic writing. The shot begins as a close-up, concentrating on the detail of a pair of hands, the left hand slowly raising and slightly depressing the handle of a car door; then the camera gradually tilts upward to reveal the hero of the film (Fontaine), another mustached man sitting near the hero, and the environment (i.e., car in motion); the camera then follows the glance of the mustached man and tilts downward concentrating on the handcuffed wrists of the two men sitting in the car; finally, the camera pans to the right and tilts back upward to reveal the hero alone in a medium close-up, that also includes the car's side window through which the street and buildings are seen in passing. It is evident that panning and tilting of the camera in this shot (better to say, take) replace editing in a way that increases the tension of the presented event by temporally extending the duration of each event, and closely exploring the space in which they occur. By concentrating on various details, and not identifying the point of view with the character's glance, Bresson transforms the narrated event into a cinematic microcosmos which pulsates with a fatal significance. Handling the camera as a "pen," Bresson stimulates in the viewer the feeling, even a sort of preconscience, that something crucial is somehow going to occur any moment. This strategy of enhancing the inner intensity of the events, Bresson will use to convey the narrative throughout the film. In addition, there is a metaphorical connotation attached to this first shot: it stems from the claustrophobic impact achieved by the pictorial composition and photographic tonality of the frame. For everything that we see on the screen befalls in a very limited locale, predominantly grey with a sharp white accent of the car window, just as the rest of the film unfolds in the depressed and confined enclosure of a prison (cell and yard). Yet, there is a narrow sight of the outside world—an opening, a tempting exit to the freedom, seen through the small square of the car window, just as, in the prison sequences, there is one small window through which Fontaine contacts the outside world.

Near the end of shot 1, we see Fontaine looking straight ahead, slightly to the right of the camera (which means that he is not looking to the narrator or spectator, but somewhere behind them, perhaps into himself). It is precisely here where Bresson stops his anatomizing camera movement and *cuts* from the interior microworld of the car to a long shot of the street photographed through the car's front window, with buildings, trees, traffic, and pedestrians moving outside. Here, then, the initial passage (i.e., the camera's minutious movement) is *broken* and replaced by a perpendicular movement of the camera penetrating through space (the street). It is important to note that the camera is still "imprisoned" in the moving car, which

indicates that it represents someone's point of view, namely Fontaine's point of view, though his facial expression does not testify to the fact that he is totally involved in the act of "looking." At the same time, taken by the kinesthetic impact of the camera movement, the spectator identifies himself with this shot, and so with the hero's state of mind—an identification which is in contrast to the expression of alienation on Fontaine's face.

In retrospect, the movement of this shot juxtaposed to the movement occuring within the previous shot (1), indeed creates a strong kinesthetic counterpoint between various movements and their interaction within the connected shots. Though subtle in a physical sense, such kinesthetic impact generates a highly cinematic sensation in perceiving this sequence, as many other climactic moments of the film. As one can see, the most powerful feature of the first two shots in this sequence is accomplished by a successful *integration* of all the elements and components described in the shot-by-shot breakdown.

The montage structure of the entire film is also conceptualized in this short introduction to *A Man Escaped*. Without going into a detailed analysis, this seems obvious from the very fact that this three minute sequence contains twenty-four shots of various scales; the first and the last of which are the longest (but containing a lot of movement either of the camera or of the characters and objects within the frame), while near the center of the sequence (when the action becomes more vigorous) the shots become shorter (shots 7, 8, 9, and 10 are one or two feet long), to reach the climax in shots which elaborate on Fontaine's decision to open the car door (shots 17, 18, 19, 20, and 23, all of which last less than a second each). As a cinematic anti-climax follows the next to the longest and the last shot of the sequence (i.e., shot 24 which is 16 feet long) conceived elliptically, so that the audience—for a moment—doesn't know whether Fontaine managed to escape, until they see him re-entering the frame (i.e., the car) followed by the agent who puts handcuffs on Fontaine's arm and hits him with the pistol. At the point when Fontaine bows his head to receive the blow, as the gun is raised higher and begins to descend onto Fontaine's head, the image *dissolves* into the first shot of the next sequence (as shown on the last frame enlargement at the end of the shot-by-shot breakdown). Enhanced by the mixed sound (roar of approaching and passing trolley, three gunshots, closing of the door, footsteps, German voices, handcuffs clanging, thud of the blow to Fontaine's head), this closing *dissolve* may connote "fainting away," while at the same time it functions as a transition to the next stage of the narrative text. The thirty frame-enlargements testify to the visual variety of the set-ups Bresson uses in this sequence, and throughout the

film. Avoiding "the tyranny of the visual," suppressing the image decorativeness "for its own sake," he builds visual dynamism on another, cinematic level where his personal comment on the narrated text comes to the fore, indicating the protagonist's ambiguous frame of mind.

By succeeding in handling the camera "as a pen," Bresson builds up from the outset a restrained cinematic rhetoric, "flexible and subtle as the written language," yet unique and appropriate to the medium of cinema.

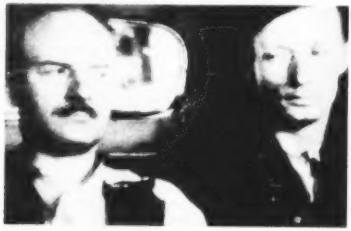
The scope of this paper does not allow further cinematic scrutiny of the sequence. Many other elements contribute to the style and meaning of the sequence. What has been discussed here is meant to demonstrate how some of the data given in the shot-by-shot breakdown may be used in close cinematic analysis.

Vlada Petric is a Professor at Harvard University.

Note

I would like to thank Boyd Norcross for helping me execute the shot-by-shot breakdown of the sequence in *A Man Escaped*.

1A



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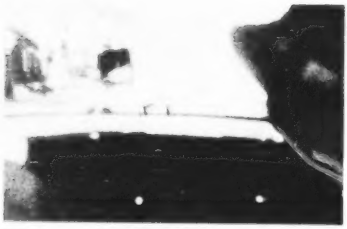
1C

1D



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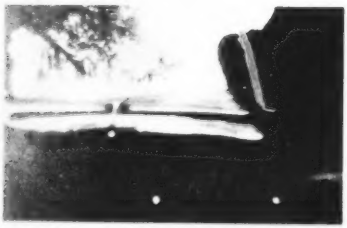

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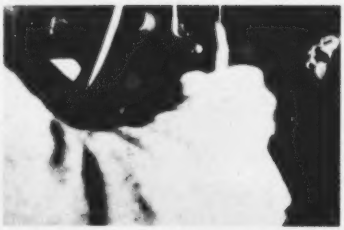

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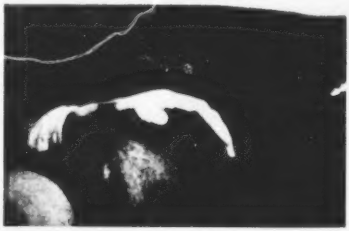

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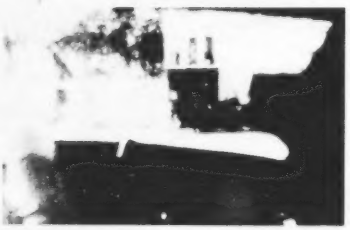

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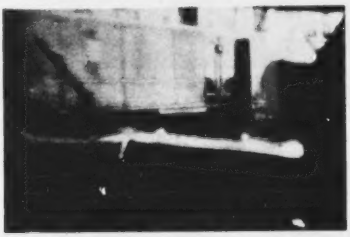

23

24A

24B

24C

24D